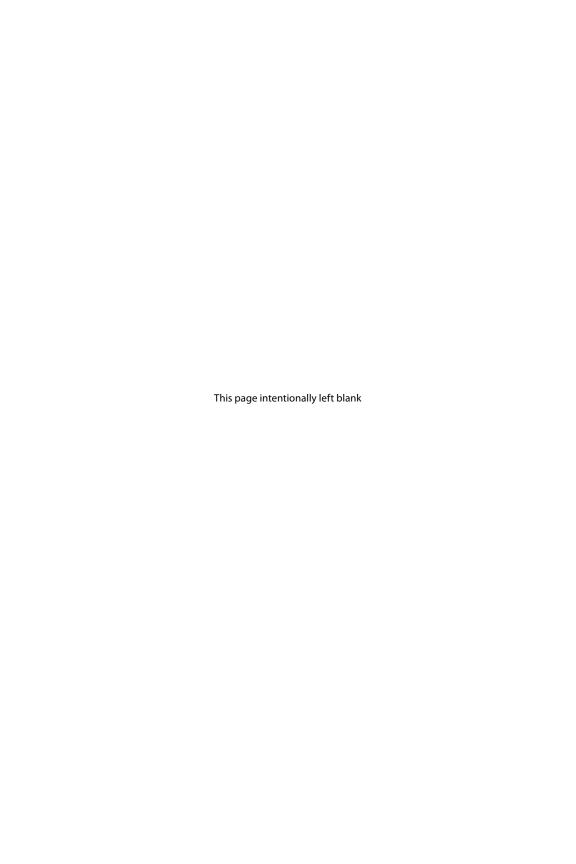
WAR & COLLAPSE WORLD WAR I AND THE OTTOMAN STATE

edited by M. Hakan Yavuz

with Feroz Ahmad





War and Collapse

World War I and the Ottoman State

edited by
M. Hakan Yavuz
with Feroz Ahmad

Utah Series in Middle East Studies

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Utah Series in Middle East Studies M. Hakan Yavuz, series editor



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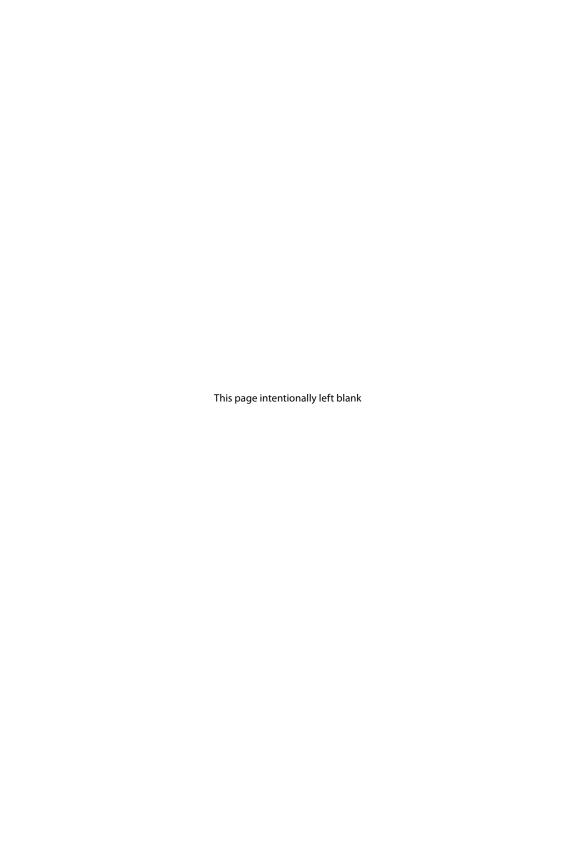
Gallipoli Bülent Ecevit

"What land were you torn away from, what makes you so sad having come here?" asked Mehmet the soldier from Anatolia, addressing the Anzac lying near.

"From the uttermost ends of the world I come, so it is written on my tombstone," answered the youthful Anzak, "and here I am buried in a land that I did not even know."

> "Do not be disheartened, mate," Mehmet told him tenderly, "you share with us the same fate in the bosom of our country."

"You are not a stranger anymore, you have become a Mehmet just like me."



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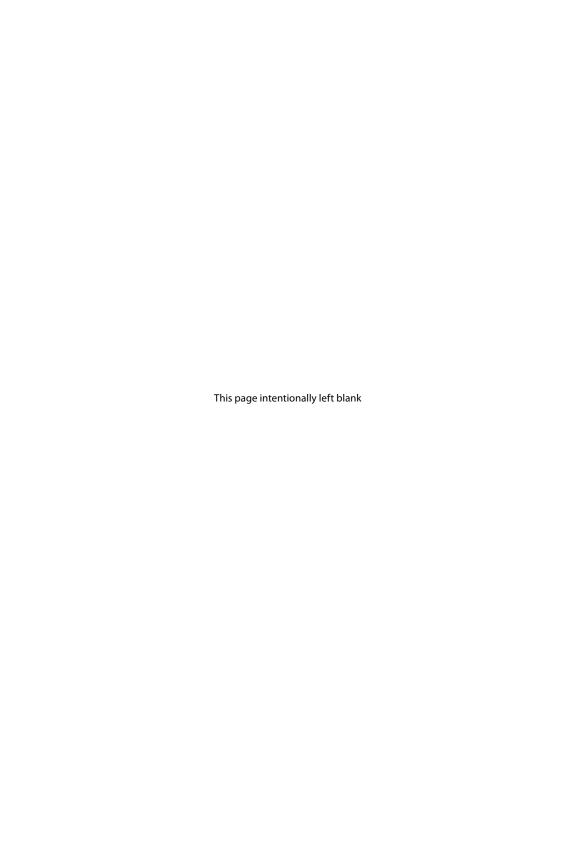
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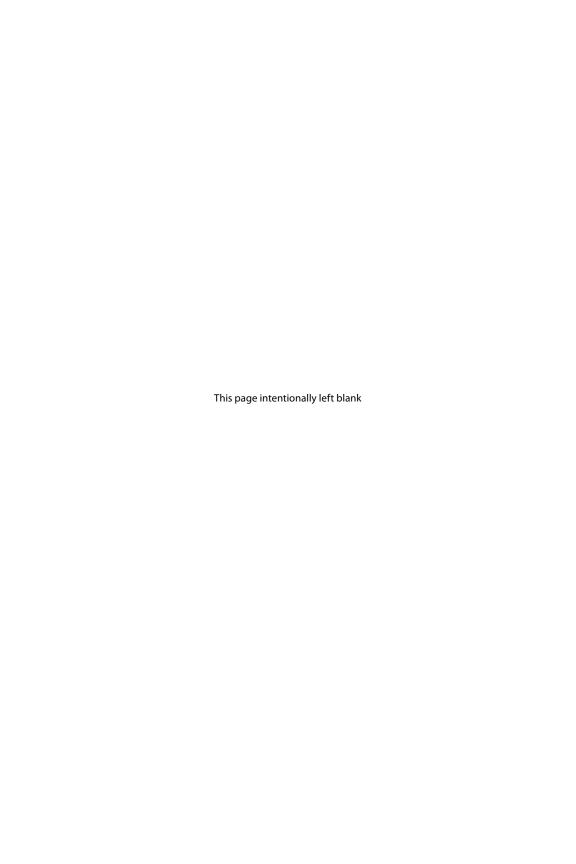
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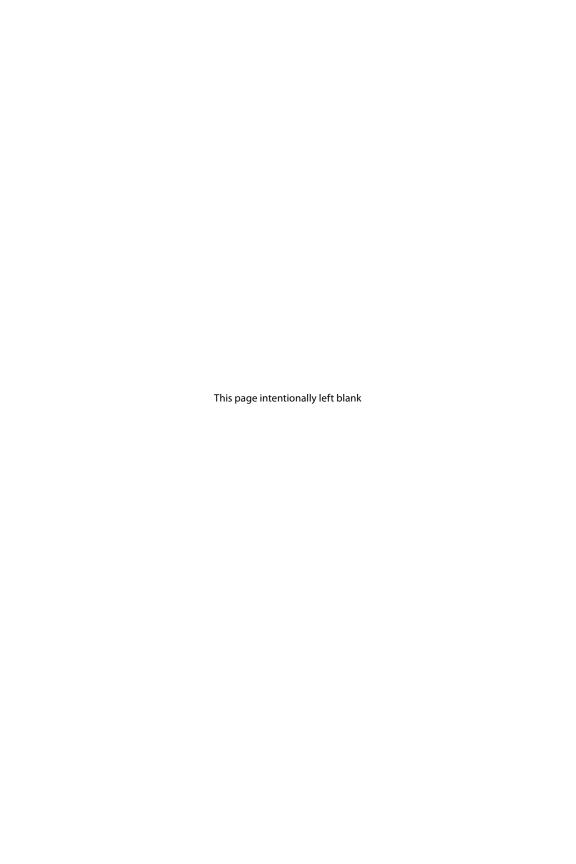
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M. Hakan Yavuz and Feroz Ahmad

Turkey was in the position of a man in a forest beset by robbers. He would willingly give up his clothes, his money, his goods and his chattels, if only his life and perhaps his shirt were saved.

— Talat Paşa

This epigraph reflects the collective angst among the elite and Muslim population of the Ottoman Empire. That sense of insecurity and deep anxiety rather than a set of well-developed ideologies shaped its decision making both before and during World War I, which sealed its fate. This volume not only examines the political origins of this collective angst but also tries to understand its implications for the Ottoman state and society. The volume is the outcome of a three-day conference held at the University of Sarajevo in Bosnia and Herzegovina in May 2012. The purpose of the conference was to examine the causes and consequences of World War I based on existing literature and documentation, but with a unique focus on how these sets of causalities pertained to the Ottoman state and society. This conference produced an unprecedented scholarly effort to provide a dialogue between the enormous field of World War I studies and the still growing field of Ottoman studies. The goal of this volume is to explain (a) what happened before and during World War I; and (b) how ethnic and national groups constructed these events to enhance their identities, promote their interests, and use these events to situate their collective selves in the international system. Although some chapters seek to create a web of undisputable ideological positions, others seek to deconstruct the existing webs of beliefs and memories, thus representing the available literature in full color.

When scholars of international relations explain the causes of the war, they typically do so with an emphasis on structural movements, which are manifested through either real or projected changes in the balance of power among the major European nations. Indeed, before the outbreak of the war, several major structural changes in the Eurocentric international system played important roles in the perception of the great powers. First, the emergence of a unified and dynamic German Empire in central Europe destabilized the balance of power by the very essence of its growing political, economic, and military expansion. Second, the weakening of Ottoman power led to a rivalry between Russia and Austria-Hungary over the Ottoman provinces in the Balkans. Third, the weakening of the Austria-Hungarian Empire further enhanced German fears that the Triple Entente could not be contained by Germany alone. Fourth, the threat caused by the modernization of the Russian army became a major concern for Germany as well as for Britain. In other words, the war was an outcome of the two long-term structural forces. One was the emergence of a strong Germany that resulted in the shift in the balance of power and the arming of Russia. Another important factor was the weakening of the Ottoman Empire, which led to an enduring rivalry between Austria-Hungary and Russia. Moreover, local Balkan nationalist movements constantly exploited this rivalry to bring external intervention at the expense of the Ottomans and Austria-Hungary. Thus, if the war was truly avoidable from the perspective of Germany, which is viewed as the initiating aggressor among the powers, then better sooner than later: Russia appeared to be well on its way to completing the modernization of its forces by 1917. Accordingly, many historians have concluded that World War I was a preventive war for Germany in order to stop the shift in the balance of power in favor of the Entente nations.

The Ottoman Empire was significant in this regard not as an active participant, however, but as an arena for these rivalries between the Great Powers. The weakening of the Ottoman Empire had several consequences. Chief among them was the rivalry between Russia and Austria-Hungary in the Balkans. This rivalry, propelled by the Ottoman decline in military and political prowess, opened the way for irredentist Balkan nationalisms that "fostered terrorism, particularly among the Macedonian and Armenian populations." When the Ottoman state reacted in a brutal manner to terrorism, the European press (based on an intricate interplay of political, economic, religious, and racial reasons) portrayed the Ottoman sultan as the "Red Sultan" and relentlessly delegitimized what they presented as a hopelessly immoral and corrupt Otto-

man state. Thanks to the overwhelming support in Russia and Britain, these irredentist nationalist groups found "external sponsors" who were more than willing and able to press for international intervention in the affairs of the Ottoman state. Serbian and Armenian nationalists relied on Russian support to expand their territories, and the Armenians sought to carve out an Armenian state in eastern Anatolia.³ Moreover, this weakness provided the space for conflict between two normative political systems: the homogeneous nation-state and multiethnic coexistence as in the imperial form of governance.

Although the debate within and between European powers over Ottoman territories had religious and racial undertones with undeniable economic consequences, it mainly had the appearance of political pragmatism, emphasizing the concept of political self-determination for the Balkan nations. Even such a view, however, cannot ignore the vested interests of the Great Powers. The anticipation of such a dramatic change in the political structure in the European territories of the Ottoman Empire meant that this was turning into an economic zone opened up for competition between the European industrial empires in their quest to increase resources and markets and to gain strategically important strongholds. Although the image of the Ottoman Empire as the "sick man of Europe" was popular among the European powers, these same European powers were actually like vultures circling around the body of this dying empire, hastening its death, and fighting among themselves to get the largest chunk of the flesh. As the Great Powers became more locked in on the tempting prospects of rewards, the indigenous groups in the Balkans became more assertive and vice versa. Both were feeding off each other, and the manner in which this relates to World War I may be linked to the aftermath of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78 and the Balkan Wars of 1912-13.4

Economic competition over world resources was the main underlying reason for the war. Britain and France accumulated huge resources by colonizing different countries, and neither empire wanted to compete with the newly emerging empires such as Germany, Italy, Russia, and Austria-Hungary. They all had an eye on the Ottoman territories and accordingly drafted plans to carve out the empire in the Balkans, the Middle East, and Anatolia. The fight over the railroads is a strong example of this commercial conflict among the imperialist powers. They all competed over railroad monopolies, and the path to war was paved by the construction of new railroads. No empire wanted to be left behind in this scramble for the most strategically valuable parts of the Ottoman

Empire. German ambition and industrial potential scared France and Britain, sparking a major naval arms race between Berlin and London. Moreover, the German occupation of Alsace-Lorraine triggered political turmoil in France, where the desire for revenge dominated other considerations.

The developments in the Balkans reflected total cognizance of these tensions between the Great Powers and of the thin line between economic competition and military escalation. The time between the Russo-Turkish War and World War I provided ample evidence that Balkan politics mainly served Russia among the powers. In 1903 a group of Serbian nationalist military officers killed King Alexander and put Peter Karadordević on the throne, whose absolute dependence on Russia advanced its expansionist policies. Serbian irredentist nationalism constituted a major destabilizing force in the Balkans and threatened both Vienna and Istanbul. The Balkan Wars of 1912–13 seemed like the writing on the wall: Russia's influence in the region and the constant weakening of Ottoman control were now shown in actuality, proving that the balance of power was in transition. This realization was especially evident in the growth of Serbian confidence and Austrian and Ottoman fears.

Although World War I was triggered by the assassination of Austro-Hungarian archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife, Sophie, by Gavrilo Princip, a Serbian nationalist, the structural causes are rooted in the contradiction between European imperialism and evolving irredentist nationalisms in the Balkans. The following chapters revolve around the deep tension between the old normative order that was shaped by the key assumptions of imperialism and the struggle of new emerging nations and the nation-state system in the Balkans. The irredentist form of nationalism became an important ideological force in the hands of new Balkan states to overcome this legitimacy problem.

Both the Austro-Hungarians and the Ottomans ruled over polyglot empires with diverse ethnic and religious groups, and both confronted irredentist nationalist movements. The Serbs were the greatest threat to the power of Vienna in the Balkans. Germany worried that this threat was further weakening its ally. The assassination at Sarajevo offered the opportunity to crush Serbian irredentism. Although Serbia agreed on most of the demands put forth by Vienna's ultimatum of July 23, 1914, Vienna was not satisfied and declared war on Serbia on July 28. The German decision makers did not expect a general European war and aimed for a localized confrontation between Austria-Hungary and Serbia. Serbia asked its ally Russia for help, and Russia reluctantly decided to

carry out a general mobilization on the next day. Germany regarded this Russian mobilization as a *casus belli* according to its Schlieffen plan. This plan was designed to knock France out of contention before the Russian mobilization could be completed, as Germany did not want to fight a war on two fronts. The Schlieffen plan emphasized the belief in German superior speed and the advantage of an offensive approach. It was based on a preemptive attack on France as a prerequisite for success in the war with Russia. Thus Germany mobilized and attacked France through Belgium. When the Belgian government rejected the German demand for passage, Germany invaded Belgium, which called upon Britain to fulfill the Treaty of 1839 that guaranteed Belgian neutrality. Hence a series of events and miscalculations turned what initially had the appearance of a localized war into a war between the world's Great Powers.

Austria presented the war to its public as a strictly limited war on Serbia. But the war escalated into a world war beyond the expectations of the major powers. In fact the Ottoman Empire initially did not become a belligerent but instead used the war to protect its territorial integrity and enhance its economic independence by abrogating the Capitulations. These Capitulations were designed to provide the citizens of states trading in the Ottoman Empire with concessions that would free them from local jurisdiction and grant extensive commercial privileges such as low tax rates and levies. The European powers used the capitulations to fortify the subjugation of the Ottoman Empire and stifle its economic development. One of the primary objectives of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) government was to restore its economic independence by abolishing the Capitulations. The CUP believed that it was preventing economic development and the creation of a Muslim business class that was totally independent of the European powers. Although some scholars tend to interpret this as a sign of the Turkification of the economy, we should be very cautious about reading the struggle for economic independence as nationalism. Even if it was motivated by nationalism, it was not a type of nationalism designed to exclude non-Turks or non-Muslims.

The chapters in the first part of this volume expand on the brief discussion presented above and provide the broader frame for the following parts. They address the familiar structural factors thought to shape the thinking of major actors, while being innovative in the attention given to the role of human agency and contingencies in historical processes. Their overall analyses reveal an entire set of previously underexamined competing and conflicting motives and expectations that played a role in

the outbreak of the war. The Ottoman leadership operated under the reasonable belief that the major powers would partition the state if it were not allied to a great power. Moreover, some state actors decided that, if war broke out, it would be better to declare war toward the final stages of the conflict rather than at the beginning.

THE BALKAN WARS AND THEIR LEGACY OF COLLECTIVE ANGST

To understand the Ottoman decision to enter the war and also some of its desperate strategies, we need to treat World War I as a continuation of the Balkan Wars. As Jeremy Salt argues, "For Europe the Great War began in 1914 and ended in 1918. For the Turks the Great War began in 1912 and ended in 1923, the First World War being preceded by conflict in the Balkans and followed by more conflict in western Anatolia, southeastern Anatolia, and the Caucasus until the final peace settlement of 1923."

Thus historical understanding of this period should be treated as a whole with the realization that the events of the period were interwoven: the same actors and the same institutions were involved. Moreover, the warring parties would translate defeat and humiliation on one front into a revenge attack on the other. To understand what happened in 1915, 1917, or 1919, when Mustafa Kemal organized the Muslim resistance against the occupying forces, we must take the shadow of the Balkan Wars into account.⁹

The role of public opinion in the Ottoman entry into the war as well as the alliance with Germany is another aspect of the origins of World War I that has been insufficiently studied thus far but is discussed in this volume. Several factors prepared public opinion in favor of Germany. For instance, Britain's decision to seize two Ottoman battleships, *Reşadiye* and *Sultan Osman* (which were ordered and bought by the Ottoman navy), led to anti-British sentiments among the public as well as among intellectuals. This empowered pro-German politicians in the Ottoman state. Another factor that played an important role in the preparation of public opinion before the war was the Armenian Reform Project, which once again exposed the vulnerability of the Ottoman Empire in its eastern provinces. Both the public and military officers believed that "a war would provide an opportunity to restore the pride and honor of the Ottoman army, and erase the shame of defeat in the Balkans conflict." War and war preparations offered an opportunity for the public to escape

from the shame of the defeat and social malaise of the Ottoman Muslim society.

The Balkan defeats and the looming threat from the Entente powers to partition the Ottoman Empire facilitated a feeling of collective angst fear for the future existence of Ottoman Muslims and the state—that motivated people to mobilize in order to protect its survival. 12 The mass deportation, killings, and ethnic cleansing of the Balkan Muslims had helped to form this Muslim identity.¹³ Søren Kierkegaard's concept of anxiety offers an avenue for understanding the Ottoman Muslim reaction to this existential threat. Kierkegaard argues that anxiety—concern for the future—is what helps humans define themselves.¹⁴ The expectation that something negative is about to happen is the outcome of a perceived threat to security and survival. The intense experience of the Balkan Wars generated feelings of angst that gripped the Muslim communities throughout the empire. 15 It was not fear of the Russian threat to occupy the Ottoman capital that defined the dominant mode of feeling in the Ottoman Muslim public but rather angst over the perceived threat to their very existence as Ottoman Muslims. The Balkan Wars taught the Ottoman public that the threats ahead were not just to Ottoman sovereignty but to the very existence of Ottoman Muslims. This feeling of angst intensified the level of vigilance and deeply affected the public's attitude toward perceived threats in the future.

In this sense the most important factor in shaping Ottoman public opinion in favor of war was the forced deportation of Muslims from the Balkans to the Ottoman territory. 16 The Muslims were rooted out of their homes in the Balkans, and this policy of religious cleansing helped to create a politicized public that demanded that the state take action and end the persecution of Muslims. The painful stories of Muslim immigrants who suffered at the hands of Balkan states coupled with the indifference of the European powers to their misery deeply shaped public opinion in the Ottoman state against the Entente powers. These stories were exchanged not only via the newspapers but especially in the coffeehouses of major urban centers and accordingly created a new public opinion that highlighted the notions of dehumanization and helplessness before the sheer European determination to wipe out the Muslim presence in the Balkans and even in Anatolia. 17 The soldiers and leaders who fought at the Balkan fronts as well as the large number of Muslims who were driven out of their homes all experienced anguish that manifested itself in terms of growing insecurity, anxiety, depression, and exaggerated fears.

The Balkan defeat spread paranoia concerning the partition of Anatolia into small states under foreign rule. Indeed, when the war started many refugees from the Balkans brought their recollections along with them and were the most assertive in mobilizing the society against the Entente powers. Previously silenced stories of atrocities at the hand of Balkan Christian states were put into circulation by the communal leaders, in some cases with the support of the state. In other words, muted memories of the Balkan Wars became the central focus of the definition of Muslim identity.

Under these political and military conditions the public was under a strong impression that being Muslim was enough reason to be deported and killed. This in turn led to the politicization of Muslim consciousness and turned Islam into a boundary marker of "us" versus "them" (non-Muslims). From the standpoint of the Ottoman leadership, it made great sense to utilize the symbolic power of the caliphate during this time of heightened Islamic consciousness. In October 1914 the sultan-caliph issued a fatwa for jihad, calling Muslims throughout the world to rally to the defense of Islam and the empire against the Entente powers. The Ottoman state deployed Islamic, not nationalist, language and symbols for mass mobilization both within the empire and in the peripheral territories such as the Balkans, the Arabian Peninsula, North Africa, the Caucasus, and India. This fatwa caused major worry among the Entente powers, which all had large numbers of Muslim populations in their empires. In order to contain the effects of the fatwa, Britain pursued an alliance with the amir of Mecca, Sharif Husayn ibn Ali, who held the most prestigious position in Islam. Sharif Husayn tried to cash in on the situation by seeking British support to establish an independent Arab kingdom in exchange for his support of British war efforts. Following the Husayn-McMahon Correspondence, Husayn issued a fatwa on June 16, 1916, calling for an Arab revolt to rid the Arab Middle East of the Ottomans. Indeed Husayn's son Faysal led major tribal military units and captured Damascus in October 1918. Due to the previous secret agreement with France, however, Faysal was not allowed to establish an Arab kingdom in Syria, and the Fertile Crescent was divided between Britain and France. Despite the strong sense of persecution among Muslims in Anatolia, this sentiment was not shared by the Muslims in other territories of the empire and did not dictate their set of priorities in the war. This belief that the Ottoman leadership would be able to convey the sense of existential threat to other Muslim provinces proved to be a significant

internal miscalculation, along with the international miscalculations by all powers concerned.

PART I. THE ORIGINS OF WORLD WAR I AND THE OTTOMAN ROAD TO WAR

The dialectical tension between imperialism and nationalism is at the core of this volume's endeavor to understand the causes and consequences of World War I. After the Treaty of Berlin in 1878, which came after the devastating defeat of the Ottoman state in its war with Russia, the Ottoman territories became the open land for European powers to annex or control territory through regional nationalist movements. The papers presented at the conference also found that these regional actors were not passive subordinates of the major powers but also actors of their own accord. They showed an element of agency in the promotion of their interests through the exploitation of the tensions between the major powers. The last four decades leading to World War I witnessed a series of conflicts and wars that were motivated by European imperialist tendencies and irredentist nationalisms in the Balkan states. The weakening of the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian Empires provided more opportunities for the newly emerging irredentist nationalist movements.

The following chapters also convey the notion that two diametrically different readings of the war are in existence. One group argues that the war was inevitable, especially after the Balkan Wars (1912-13), whereas the second group plays down aspects of inevitability and instead focuses on the war as an outcome of miscalculations and misperceptions. Aside from the two clear hostile blocs in the years leading up to 1914—the Entente powers (France, Russia, and Britain, affiliated bilaterally with both blocs) and the Triple Alliance or Central Powers (Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy)—Sean McMeekin argues that a range of activities also served to align lesser powers such as the Balkan states and Ottoman Empire. Hence neither of these blocs was homogeneous: the cooperation was more occasional and less predictable than the concept of alliances typically suggests. In McMeekin's view, the lingering tensions between Russia and Britain over the Ottoman and Persian territories demonstrate clear conflicts between self-interest and common interest among the Entente powers. Moreover, the new leftist government in France had deep misgivings about Russian intentions. McMeekin also detects significant fault lines in the Triple Alliance. While Italy had conflicting interests with Austria-Hungary regarding the Balkans, Germany had disagreements with the Austro-Hungarians, especially during the Balkan Wars of 1912–13. The relations between Wilhelm II and Franz Josef I were troublesome, and they tried to avoid each other. In addition, although it is known that Germany was training and supporting the Ottoman army, a number of disagreements also existed between Germany and the Ottoman leadership. Germany stayed idle during the Balkan Wars and also supported Greek claims on Albania. McMeekin points out that Bulgaria, which was created by Russia, expected to join Germany. Thus he concludes that the war was not inevitable, because no major power was ready or willing to fight. The war resulted "more from contingent decisions than from firm alliance obligations. No real 'system' was at work that either functioned or broke down. It was human choice and human error that produced the catastrophe." 18

The Ottoman Empire joined the Central Powers with the signing of the August 1914 Turco-German alliance and entered the war on October 28 with the bombing of Russian ports. ¹⁹ The fear of being partitioned by the Entente powers and German pressure forced the Ottomans to enter the war. After the humiliating defeat in 1912–13, which had resulted in the cleansing of Ottoman Muslims from the Balkans, it was no longer an option for the Ottomans to remain neutral. The intentions of the Entente powers were clear concerning the Russian designs on the eastern Ottoman provinces and the straits connecting the Black Sea to the Aegean Sea. ²⁰ The only hope for relief was found in the alliance with Germany. The discussion of the Ottoman role in World War I therefore presents two separate issues: the reasons for the Ottoman alliance with Germany and the reasons why the Ottomans decided to enter the war. ²¹

Four notably different narratives seek to explain why the Ottoman Empire entered the war. One narrative, reflective of the Turkish mainstream, places blame on the CUP for pursuing an adventurous policy and seeking to westernize the empire by getting rid of traditional Ottoman institutions and practices. This narrative focuses on the triumvirate of Enver Paşa, Talat Paşa, and Cemal Paşa but centers on Enver as the main culprit who was motivated by pan-Turkism and German benefits. This approach reduces the entire narrative to the ambitious, risk-taking personality of Enver Paşa. ²²

The second narrative is the work of a new generation of Islamic scholars who also rail against the CUP's seeming secularism and westernization, with an inherently nostalgic view of the Hamidian regime. They accuse the CUP of being a nationalistic organization that destroyed

Islamic solidarity. The Islamist aspect of this view, which is becoming more dominant in Turkish universities as well as at the Turkish Historical Society, is found in the tendency to praise Abdülhamid II and vilify the CUP.

The third narrative centers on genocide, advanced by scholars such as Vahakn Dadrian, Taner Akçam, and Fuat Dündar, who argue that the CUP, inspired by Social Darwinism, was a nationalist organization that treated the war as an opportunity to create an homogeneous nation-state by ethnically cleansing non-Muslims (for a critique of ethnic cleansing in late Ottoman history, see Hasan Kayalı's essay in this volume, chapter 45). This narrative looks at Ottoman history from the outside, being inspired by genocide scholarship, and is addressed in part IV, which centers on the Caucasus front. In order to frame the relocation and massacres as genocide these scholars had no option but to present the CUP as a racist and nationalist organization with the goal of homogenizing Anatolia through demographic cleansing. They usually characterize the massacres as the first genocide that involved German military officers.

This volume introduces a fourth narrative offered by historians, some of whom are military historians.²⁵ In their view the Ottoman decision to enter the war was inevitable, pragmatic, and strategic, as the Entente powers did not provide any guarantee for the territorial integrity of the Ottoman state and even indicated intentions to see the Ottoman Empire dissolve.²⁶ This group of scholars also insists that the dominant identity of the CUP was Ottoman and Islamic not Turkish nationalist and that the CUP vision was to sustain the empire as a whole. This view is similar to that of Michael Reynolds, who after many years of careful study concluded that the CUP was not a Turkish nationalist organization and that the war strategies in the Caucasus were largely shaped by concern for security instead of nationalistic or Islamic ideology.²⁷ From this perspective it was not nationalism but rather pragmatic considerations of keeping the empire intact and enhancing its economic sovereignty that played an important role in the decision to enter the war.

Feroz Ahmad and Altay Cengizer are the most vocal in this group. Ahmad rejects commonly held theses on the role of the CUP during the war. He voices his concern over myths that dominate the perception of CUP policy, such as the view that the entire decision-making process was in the hands of an inexperienced and adventurous triumvirate who brought about the destruction of the Ottoman Empire. Ahmad's analysis shows that the fiscal situation and the desperate need for loans drove the Ottomans to war. Considering the subservient and dependent nature of

the Ottoman relationship with the Germans, he rejects notions that the CUP had an initiatory role in the international developments on the eve of World War I.

Cengizer, like Ahmad, argues that the CUP policy was neither adventurous nor naive: it was pragmatically based on the experience of the Eastern Question in the late nineteenth century and specifically on the experience with the Great Powers since the revolution of 1908 and the Balkan Wars. The war, for Cengizer, was imposed on the Ottoman Empire by the imperialist policies of Britain. For want of a worthy land army that could capably stand against the German forces, Britain definitely needed Russian troops to do the fighting for the Entente powers. Hence Britain much more readily than France used the promise of Istanbul and the Straits to keep the tsarist empire in the War. Poland was already a part of the tsarist empire. Russia, averse to incorporating any German population, would not have continued to the very end to risk revolution at home for Posen, a 30-km strip of land.

The partition of the Ottoman Empire was one of the central objectives of the war. After the Balkan Wars the main Russian foreign policy goal was to control the Straits, along with eastern Anatolia. In March 1915 Russian foreign minister Sergei Sazonov convinced his British and French allies to agree to the Russian control of the Straits. Indeed Britain used the Straits as a bargaining chip in order to shape the Russian foreign and military policy. Thus the Straits were like the big prize of the war, reserved for Russia so that it might be successfully induced to act in line with the interests of Britain and France. For years the question of how to carve up the Ottoman territories had been a source of tension between Britain, France, and Russia. But once the idea of dividing the Ottoman land became the focal point of the Entente, there was no chance that Britain and France would accept the Ottoman offers of its neutrality during the war in exchange for guarantees that its territorial integrity would remain intact.

Everything seemed to be against the Ottomans. Relief was found in the form of signing a secret treaty with Germany. Most importantly, this treaty was directed only against Russia and not against any other European power. The Ottoman Empire, convinced that the war would be short, did not rush to enter it but wanted to extend the time available for extracting more resources from Germany in order to enhance its military capabilities. This was the most it could do, considering the refusal of the Entente powers, individually and collectively, to guarantee the integrity and independence of the Ottoman Empire. In 1913, following the Balkan

Wars, ample and undeniable evidence indicated that the Ottoman Empire could not sustain itself while isolated. Having been rejected by the Entente and being convinced that Ottoman survival was dependent on ending this isolation, the Ottomans found relief by signing a secret treaty with Germany.

In his discussion of the Ottoman decision to raid the Russian Black Sea ports on October 29, 1914, Gün Kut highlights the CUP's independent thinking. The Ottomans were not just complicit in German planning, and he argues that the Ottomans formed a conscious policy through debate and planning within the cabinet. The Ottoman leaders and the public were concerned about Russian plans to carry out territorial expansion at their expense. The cabinet was fully aware that the Great Powers were discussing the partition of the empire and also knew that neutrality was not viable. The only option under those circumstances was to achieve naval superiority in the Black Sea and keep Russia at bay until the end of the war. In fact the closing of the Dardanelles had started the war in all but name, and the logical corollary was a preemptive strike in the Black Sea. Germany had also put immense pressure for this, but that did not determine the rationale behind the attack but only its timing. While public opinion was more or less unified about protecting Ottoman sovereignty, members of the Ottoman cabinet were divided into four groups on what course of action to take:

(i) supporters of Germany, who were convinced that the Triple Alliance would win a decisive and speedy victory; (ii) supporters of the Entente, who believed that, owing to their vast resources Britain, France and Russia would triumph in the end; (iii) those who were aware of Russian intentions toward Turkey and suggested an alignment with Germany, but coupled their suggestion with the proposal that Turkey should avoid an armed conflict and maintain armed neutrality until she was satisfactorily prepared for war; (iv) dissidents advocating complete neutrality.²⁸

The position of the Entente powers during the negotiation of the Armenian Reform Project, their support for the Greek claims to the Aegean islands, the worsening financial crisis of the state and the Entente powers' rejection of any plan to abolish Capitulations, the British refusal to hand over two ships to the Ottoman Empire, and especially the Entente's refusal to give material guarantees to the Ottomans against Russia and Greece enhanced the position of the first group, which was led by

Enver Paşa. Moreover, Enver Paşa closely worked with the third group, which wanted to ally with Germany but used all means to delay Ottoman entry into the war.

PART II. IDEAS, IDEOLOGIES, AND HUMAN AGENCY

The CUP dominated the Second Constitutional period (1908–18). The core identity of the CUP is crucial for understanding developments before and during World War I. The CUP, which was established in 1889, went through several mutations and always remained a mix of ideologies and identities with a unified goal of saving the state and modernizing society. Thus it would be a gross mistake to treat the CUP as a nationalistic organization with the goal of homogenizing Anatolia.²⁹ Although Turkish nationalism as a motivating ideology of state policies became a dominant force in the early 1920s, the intellectual fermentation during the CUP period offers insights into the ideological background of contemporary Turkey. During the Second Constitutional period, Ottomanism and Islamism played a much more critical role than nationalism in the efforts to save the state. Serhun Al aptly argues that the CUP leaders were intellectual heirs to the Young Ottomans. In late Ottoman historiography the conventional periodization and conceptualization regarding the state policy of identity is the emergence of Ottomanism in the Tanzimat era (1839–76), Islamism in the Hamidian era (1876–1908), and Turkism in the Young Turk era (1908–18). While this approach emphasizes rupture more than continuity, it also adopts mutually exclusive identity categorizations that neglect the common mind-set and psyche of late Ottoman elites' primary concern with the ontological (in)security of the state. In opposition to such an approach, Serhun Al's chapter examines how Ottomanism as a state project of patriotism emerged as an antidote to the increasing concerns over the survival of the Ottoman state in the nineteenth century and showed continuity from Tanzimat reformers to the Young Turk elites by framing a dialectical relationship among the concepts of the state, patriotism, and Ottomanism.

The concepts of constitutionalism, freedom, nation, homeland, parliamentary legitimacy, and secularism all were redefined and put into practice during this period. A number of chapters in this volume analyze the CUP and its modus operandi from historical, sociological, and political perspectives. The end result of this collection is a view of the CUP as a movement with the goal of saving the state by reforming and

rejuvenating society through education and science. The overall theme among the chapters outlined below is that this movement was willing to adopt diverse and even competing strategies in order to save the state and create a dynamic and patriotic economy. The current historiography on the CUP likely will benefit from these fresh perspectives on the movement's complexities.

For example, Ramazan Hakki Öztan argues that the main goal of Ottoman political discourse focused on saving the state by stressing Ottomanism as the social glue regardless of ethnicity or religious affiliation. The redefinition of the relationship of Ottoman subjects vis-à-vis the state is an account not merely of a top-down modernization but of a set of state-society interactions. It is an intricate story of both success and failure. Yet the coming of postwar arrangements sealed the fate of a possible Ottoman nation in political terms, while the loyalties of Ottoman Albanians, Armenians, Circassians, Greeks, Jews, Kurds, and Turks needed to be revamped in the following decades. Öztan accordingly frames Ottomanism as a response to popular nationalist currents and makes use of the concept of "official nationalism," which enables him to draw comparisons to the Ottoman case.

Erdem Sönmez examines the ideas of Ahmed Riza (1859–1930), who was the major ideologue and intellectual and one of the most important leaders of the Young Turk movement. His political and intellectual portrait was significant because he stood between two generations of constitutionalism: the Young Ottomans and the Unionists. Furthermore, he was the most prominent figure in the early stages of the Second Constitutional period owing to his longtime efforts in the opposition movement against Hamidian rule. By highlighting the main characteristics of Ahmed Riza's political thought, Sönmez challenges those scholars who portray Riza as a Turkish nationalist, centralist, authoritarian, and militarist who was in favor of a coup.

Indeed the intellectual debate in the Ottoman Empire after the Balkan Wars morphed into a search for a "salvation" ideology. Thus positivist and materialist thought became more influential among the Young Turks, due to their elitist approach to save society through a new design, by changing its cultural dimensions from above and reconstructing a new social entity in order for the Ottoman Empire to be a part of European civilization. Therefore the exclusive, imposing, and future-designing understanding of positivist science was ideal for them. At the same time, a new generation of scholars with Islamic backgrounds also had a chance to contact other sources of European thought through translated books.

Their theories were partly of Islamic origin with modern interpretations, and they thought that modern institutions could not be adopted without basing them on deeper foundations.

Behlül Özkan offers a critical analysis of the transformation from an imperial *vatan* (fatherland) to a national one after the Balkan Wars. The loss of territories in the Balkans and in Crete was among the foremost factors that made a deep impact upon the way in which the physical and mental boundaries of the vatan were imagined. During this turbulent era three forms of identities—Islamism, Ottomanism, and Turkism—coalesced for the purpose of maintaining the Ottoman Empire's territorial integrity.

Umut Uzer focuses on the impact of the territorial losses and deportations of the Muslims from the Balkans on the emergence of a new national consciousness in the early twentieth century. He argues that the political events of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the Ottoman Balkans and the Middle East had a direct impact on how the Muslims of Anatolia redefined their identity as Turkish. The series of uprisings by Serbs, Greeks, Bulgarians, and later Albanians, Kurds, and Arabs and the subsequent territorial losses made the Turkish national project the only viable option for the Turkish-speaking Muslims of Istanbul and Anatolia. This topic of public opinion is examined by York Norman, who elaborates on the diversity of Ottoman public opinion in its debate on the war. As he shows, a rich pamphlet literature from different ideological quarters was available in the Ottoman Empire, ranging from Islamist to nationalist and socialist visions of the future.

Eyal Ginio shows through examples from the *Harb Mecmuasi* (War Periodical) that the state sought to mobilize society for its war efforts through images. The articles in the periodical emphasized the shared Ottoman nation, state, and army. They rarely used the term "Turk." Ginio's chapter challenges the argument that Turkish nationalism was the major motivating force for the war efforts. Through symbolic representations the journal tried to shape the populace's political world. People's understanding of where they were and what they represented was made possible through images that were integrated into their cognitive maps. In other words, the journal had the ability to control nature through signs and images that constitute the indexes of our identity: who we are and what we all share.

The social and political effects of World War I varied from region to region. For instance, conditions of the war and the geopolitical insecurity of Turkey helped to constitute the idea of friend and foe. During World

War I and in the postwar period the boundary between "us" and "them" facilitated the dissemination and internalization of Muslim-Turkish nationalism. Muslim and Turkish identities were strengthened against the enemy, whereas war led to further fragmentation of identities in the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire and empowered local identities.

PART III. THE WAR AND THE OTTOMAN HOME FRONT

The chapters in this section examine state-society relations, especially the relations between the state and non-Muslim minorities, which were transformed by war conditions. Pamela Dorn Sezgin examines how the war conditions came to shape intercommunal relations in the Ottoman Empire. She argues that Greeks, Jews, and Armenians were well integrated into the late Ottoman Empire as active participants in the creation of cultural, social, and political institutions. In the century prior to World War I ethnic nationalism became an ever-increasing threat to the Ottoman Empire, promoting dismemberment, a process encouraged by the European Great Powers. Non-Muslim minorities reacted to the opportunity spaces created by nationalism. Sezgin argues that the Armenians, working within the Ottoman system, first were reorganized as changes in the millet system were instituted in the 1860s, including the so-called Armenian Constitution of 1863. As the nineteenth century continued, they developed their own militant political organizations that had goals of achieving autonomy. The Jews, in contrast, had no ethnic/national uprisings or internal political movements to challenge the Ottoman Empire. Unlike the Armenians and Greeks, local Jews were consistently loyal to the Ottoman state. The Ottoman state's relationships with the non-Muslims by the time of World War I were also colored by the legacy of the Balkan Wars. The security interests of the government during World War I were heightened by the potential of sedition and treason by Christian groups who had a history of rebellion and ties to foreign powers. Both the Armenians and Greeks had been supported by the Entente powers in their national uprisings and rebellions, and Christian insurgent groups were trained in Russia. Sezgin's survey of relations between the Ottoman leadership and the different non-Muslim minorities during World War I shows that the attitudes of the minorities themselves played a role that is as critical as the role of the CUP in determining the quality of their treatment during the tumultuous times of war.

Ahmet Efiloğlu examines the destruction of the communal relations in the Ottoman Empire, especially the securitization of minority groups. He points out the significance of the collaboration between the Ottoman Greek and Bulgarian minorities and their co-ethnic armies before World War I. The migrations of the Ottoman Greeks from Thrace to Greece started during the events of the Balkan Wars, when the complicity of the local Greek populations enabled the invading armies to carry out raids and massacres of Muslims, resulting in the migrations of the Thracian Muslims. Efiloğlu's well-documented chapter describes how vengeance became a motivating force for the Muslims, who then went on to attack the Greek Orthodox. He makes three integrated contributions by illustrating how population movements are the cyclical outcome of victim groups in fear of reprisal; how the local context (humiliation, dispossession, and killings) determines the pattern of expulsion and migration to a greater degree than the policies of the state; and how under certain conditions the state could resist local pressure and shape the ups and downs of the population flow if it had resources.

Ryan Gingeras's chapter complements Efiloğlu's study yet stands out in its detailed analysis of the suffering of the Greek minority. Gingeras argues that the Ottoman elite had a clear plan for ethnic cleansing of Thrace's non-Muslim population. He also implies that this social engineering policy later was implemented against the Armenian population. While Efiloğlu highlights security concerns as being the main motive behind the actions taken against the Greek minority in Thrace, Gingeras thinks that the motivation was nationalistic ideology. When the Ottomans recaptured Thrace from the Bulgarians in July 1913, the region consequently witnessed major population movements. Those who collaborated with the occupying armies moved to Greece in order to avoid violence that would be born out of vengeance. Efiloğlu argues: "The postwar Greek migrations, in contrast, were caused by local Muslims' feelings of vengeance (reciprocation toward the Greeks) as well as the Greeks' fear of possible legal repercussions of their wartime actions in the Ottoman courts."30

After these two chapters on the relations between the Ottoman state and the Greeks, Serpil Atamaz turns attention to women's attitudes about World War I and the parties involved. Based on women's writings and speeches of the time, Atamaz tries to draw a picture of the way in which women perceived the events, policies, and issues related to the war. Some women used the war to glorify the nation, while other women used it to criticize and challenge ethnic, religious, and patriarchal customs. She

also examines women's involvement in World War I through voluntary work or as part of the government's attempt to mobilize society for the salvation of the nation. Atamaz offers excellent insights on the impact of the war on women by focusing on issues such as women's participation in public discourse, integration into the workforce, and changes in women's clothing.

Nicole A. N. M. van Os posits that women's participation in the workforce did not lead to emancipation. She provides a detailed set of data before concluding that women's work during the war did not necessarily allow them to enter the male domain or let them intermingle more freely with men. Those who worked in the workshops of the charitable women's organizations were in all-female environments, except for the occasional male foreman, which had been a general practice in the textile industry before the war as well. Even in the army workshops women were kept secluded from men in single-sex departments. According to this view, World War I brought about little change in gender relations.

Aliye Mataraci's microstudy has broader implications. She presents an interesting analysis of commercial correspondence of an Ottoman Muslim trading house between the end of March and the end of November 1914, which overlapped with the interwar period between the Balkan Wars and World War I. The letters depict some of the dramatic instances of the period: financial hardships accompanying the Balkan Wars, the spread of the boycott movement to the eastern Black Sea and the consequent forced departure of Greek traders, the awakening of Muslim-Turkish subjects to the early propositions of a "national economy," and the commercial closures and openings brought by the beginning of World War I. By way of these letters Mataraci questions some basic assumptions in the current historiography of the period.

Shifting the emphasis to the active participants in the war (soldiers), Mehmet Beşikçi's chapter examines the problem of desertion in the Ottoman army during World War I. Beşikçi argues that even though no major mutinies occurred, the great number of desertions (about 17 percent of all men enlisted) did erode the Ottoman war effort. This is an important topic, because nationalist Turkish historiography ignores desertion among the Muslims and focuses on desertion of non-Muslims. Beşikçi argues that the deserters belonged to all ethnic and religious groups. By focusing mainly on Muslim Turks in Anatolia, this chapter explores the reasons for desertion as explained by military authorities and also by the deserters themselves. A large number of deserters joined armed bands and became a threat to domestic security. These armed bands formed

along ethnic and religious ties, and the state tried to collaborate with the local populations against the deserters.

Although many historians have produced a series of fairy tales about the origins and activities of the Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa, Tetsuya Sahara's important chapter shows that the Ottoman Special Forces evolved out of the war experience in the Balkans and was very much the product of a trial-and-error process. It explains the Bulgarian decision to collaborate with the Ottoman state. He argues that behind this perplexing friendship and mutual trust between the Ottomans and Bulgarians lies a secret collaboration that had been underway even before the outbreak of World War I. The chapter focuses on joint guerrilla activities between the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO) and the Ottoman Special Forces, which eventually would become the Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa (Ottoman Special Forces).

Yücel Yiğit's chapter offers a framework for how to study the Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa (TM). His study focuses on the following set of questions. Why and under what conditions do state elites decide to establish organizations such as the TM? What could this tell us about the nature of such a state with regard to its capacity and power? Without raising this fundamental theoretical question, deeper contextualization of the TM would be unsuccessful. Turning attention to the concept of "state capacity" not only would help us to understand the nature of the TM but also would improve our knowledge of the founding psyche of TM in the context of weakening state and state power. Yigit argues that the TM evolved out of the revolutionary guerrilla activities in the Balkans and became a special forces organization during World War I. It evolved in response to a semicolonial and collapsing Ottoman state with little military capacity to protect its borders. The TM participated in a number of covert operations to instigate Islamic insurrections in India, Africa, and Russia, and its methods included killing Muslim as well as Christian opponents of the CUP government during World War I. This is the first essay that seeks to contextualize the TM by explaining the conditions under which the organization emerged and its evolution over time. Its background, mentality, and discourse were built on saving and protecting the state in reaction to domestic peripheral insurgencies on the one hand and external infiltration into the domestic affairs of the Ottoman state on the other hand. While the first threat caused traumatic territorial losses for the empire, the second caused the loss of both internal and external sovereignty for the Ottoman state.31

PART IV. ARMENIAN-KURDISH AND OTTOMAN-RUSSIAN RELATIONS

The growing consensus of the Entente over the partition of the Ottoman territories and the Russian plans to annex Istanbul and eastern Anatolia provided the political and military context for the struggles between the Armenians and Kurds and between the Russians and Ottomans. Having detailed intelligence reports from the local officials about the Russian-Armenian military cooperation in terms of establishing "voluntary units" to fight against the Ottoman military and expel the Muslims from the region, the Ottoman state acted on the basis of its own security needs and decided to deport the Armenians from the war-zone in order to defend its logistic supply lines, along with the lives of Muslim communities. The decision to deport potentially hostile communities from within its territories would eventually expand to the entire Armenian (Gregorian) communities, except for those who worked for the Ottoman government, Catholic and Protestant Armenians, and also those who lived in Istanbul. The Ottoman military was fearful of the nexus between the local insurgent population and the external threats on the basis of its experience in the Balkan Wars. Indeed the Armenian rebellions in eastern Anatolia. especially the rebellion at Van in March-April 1915, played into these fears and forced the Ottoman state to develop a set of scenarios on how to cope with this domestic-external security threat. The most important factor that shaped the Ottoman war policy toward the Armenians, however, was the Russian military advances into Anatolia. The combination of Russian ambitions to conquer both sides of Anatolia and the limited Ottoman military resources led to Russian mobilization of local Kurds and Armenians to fight against the Ottoman state. Thus the Russian policy was very much at the root of the Armenian deportations and sufferings. These deportations morphed into communal massacres and marked the end of the Armenian presence in Anatolia.

M. Hakan Yavuz maps out different readings and interpretations to relocate the tragic sufferings of both Armenians and Muslims during World War I. Today there is a genuine historical debate over the characterization of these events. Although most Ottoman historians reject the oft-applied label of genocide, some scholars insist that the events of 1915 constitute genocide. Yavuz critically examines the utility of the concept of genocide and the genocide paradigm to understand what happened, why it happened, and how it happened. He categorizes those who work within

the genocide paradigm versus those who work beyond such a paradigmatic position. Yavuz thus advocates the use of more historical methods and contextualization to understand the origins and nature of the conflict in eastern Anatolia.

Academic discussions over Russian-Armenian cooperation before and during World War I must include a careful consideration of the history of violence between Russia and the Ottoman Empire and the lingering conflicts of interest between the two. Russia was the archenemy of the Ottoman state and considered Ottoman lands to be ideal for its expansion plans.³² Russia, unlike the Ottoman Empire, was much more dynamic and powerful, especially in the Caucasus, Iran, and Central Asia. The growth in its economy and population inspired major plans to modernize its military. One of the main Russian goals was to carve up Ottoman territories in the Balkans and the Caucasus, so Russia was fiercely opposed to the modernization of the Ottoman army or the construction of railroads to the eastern provinces with the help of Germany. Furthermore, Russia sought the role of the protector of Eastern Christians, especially Slavs and Armenians, to orchestrate the expulsion of Muslims from the Balkans and gain full control of the Turkish Straits as well as eastern Anatolia. Russia wanted to become the predominant power in the Black Sea area.

Mustafa Tanriverdi's chapter in this section conveys the degree of concern among the Ottoman leaders, who kept a close eye on Russian military developments in the Caucasus. He analyzes the Russian military activities in the Caucasus before World War I and explains how Russia's locus of interest shifted from the Balkans to the Caucasus. Being aware of the significance of the Caucasus for its expansion to the south, Russia sought to deploy a strong military force in the region under the proxy control of a Caucasian governor and chief of staff. Until the start of World War I Russia conducted military drills along the border and mobilized its military forces in Tbilisi, Batumi, and Sarıkamış by utilizing the railroads and macadam that were constructed in the region by Russians themselves. The Russians also ensured the participation of a considerable number of Armenians in the drills. The travelers who came to the region confirmed the presence of many Armenians along with Russians in these war preparations.

The Muslims from the Caucasus played an important role in strengthening anti-Russian attitudes. The case of the Circassians presents a parallel to that of the Armenians. The Circassians wished to find in the Ottoman Empire an external sponsor that would promote their national move-

ment, in a manner that mirrors the relations that the Armenians wanted to nurture with the Russians. Georgy Chochiev's chapter examines the political propaganda and military activities of the Ottoman-Circassian elite designed to place Circassian interests on the agenda as part of the solution for the "Caucasus issue," including its North Caucasian constituent, in the context of World War I. Chochiev evaluates the nature and effectiveness of the practical cooperation between the Circassian diaspora elite and the CUP leadership, with a view of the political forces in the North Caucasus (the "Mountaineers" government). His examination shows to what degree the projects that were devised in Istanbul, such as the conception of the Caucasian Confederation, matched up with the region's objective realities.

As the Ottomans kept a close eye on the Russian military deployments and increased cooperation with the Circassians, the course of the war proved to have tragic outcomes for the broader populations in general and Armenians in particular. To understand the collapse of the Ottoman state and the series of human tragedies such as the massacres of Armenians, we need to situate the events of 1915 in the regional and global history of imperialism, Orientalism, and nationalism and the desire to build nation-states.

The dialectic between imperialism and nationalism played an important role in Armenian-Ottoman relations. The nature of the relations between the Ottoman state and Armenians is found in the imperialist context. Donald Bloxham was the first scholar to examine these relations within larger great power politics. ³³ He singlehandedly has shown that the Armenian Question became hostage to the imperial rivalries of the major powers. In this volume Sevtap Demirci seeks to examine the Armenian issue in this context, expanding on just how the Armenian issue in Anatolia was brought to the forefront by diplomatic forums in the international political system. She claims that the Great Powers were looking to achieve in Anatolia what already had been accomplished in the Balkan territories of the Ottoman Empire. This shows the interconnectedness of the Eastern Question and the Armenian Question, the latter being the completion of the former. In other words, Turkish-Armenian relations were/are closely tangled with the designs of the Great Powers.

This volume also challenges the current tendency among genocide scholars to stress ideology or identity as the singular reason why the Ottoman state deported the Armenians. This popular brand of academic work has not yet produced any serious consideration of external factors or of the secessionist and violent nature of the Armenian nationalist

discourse.³⁴ Moreover, it appears to be deliberately neglecting the ramifications of the collaboration between the Armenian revolutionary committees and Russia as well as the political impact of the networking between these Armenian committees and the ones established in Britain and France on their behalf. For instance, Taner Akçam's work casts aside international factors, situates the atrocities experienced by the Armenians during World War I exclusively in the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, and seeks to explain the series of events solely through the mind-set of the CUP.³⁵ Akçam's work heavily relies on the declassified Ottoman documents from the Ministry of the Interior in an attempt to prove that the killings of the Armenians followed a pattern of demographic engineering concocted by the CUP, but there are growing concerns that his research is antimethodical.³⁶ Although in his recent work Akçam rejects the idea of a premeditated extermination, he still labels the totality of these atrocities "genocide," without addressing the definition of the term.

In order to understand the events of 1915, we need to focus on the following three interrelated questions: what happened, why it happened, and how it happened. Russia played a crucial role in the resurrection and militarization of the Armenian Question, especially in the aftermath of the Balkan Wars.³⁷ Russia came to the conclusion that the collapse of the Ottoman state was imminent and did not want to have any European power control the Straits or eastern Anatolia. Thus Russia started to arm the Kurds and also the Armenians. Moreover, the Russians initiated the Armenian Reform Project, which would allow Russia to administer the reforms in the region. St. Petersburg also informed the Sublime Porte that Russia would undertake military intervention if the conditions of the Armenian Christians were to worsen. The forceful entry of Russia on the side of the Armenians did not help reconciliation between the CUP and the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF). With the backing of Russia, the Armenian side issued its demands. When they were not met by the CUP, the Armenian elite in Istanbul (especially the ARF) became more intransigent. The CUP then grew more anxious about the future of Anatolia and stiffened its position even further, especially after intense Armenian protests and riots such as the ones in Anatolia in the summer and fall of 1912. Once the demands for security and restoration of land resulted in protests, the CUP had to concern itself with scenarios of Russian intervention to "save" the Armenians in what could mean the total collapse of the Ottoman state. Under the Russian military threats, Said Halim Paşa signed the Armenian Reform Project in February 1914. This reform plan signaled an ominous moment for Ottoman internal

affairs, for it was the product of fear that the Armenian rebellion would lead to Russian intervention.

The active Armenian political elite destroyed relations with the Ottoman state by closely identifying its future with the Russian archenemy.³⁸ The Armenian willingness to risk major confrontation with the Ottoman state could be the direct outcome of the Ottoman defeat in the Balkans. The Armenians, like other groups, realized that the Ottoman state was weak and financially bankrupt. Under these sociopolitical conditions members of the Armenian elite made what seemed to them at the time a rational calculation and allied with Russia against the Ottoman state. The collapse of the Ottoman Empire seemed inevitable, and the Armenian elite felt secure and confident, thanks to the development of political and military options through consultation with Russia. The Armenian National Assembly decided to develop a new reform project to establish a foundation for an independent Armenia with Russian support. In addition to this political initiative, the Armenian revolutionary committees started arming themselves for the next opportunity. This armament and preparation could not have gone unnoticed by the Ottoman leadership. Intelligence reports from the Caucasus (as Çiçek indicates in chapter 30) started to pour in about the arming of the Armenian communities, confirming the Ottoman fears of the Armenians as a hostile group intent on ending the Ottoman presence in the eastern provinces. Although the current literature seeks to present the arming of Armenians as defensive rather than aggressive, the Ottoman state regarded the armament as an offensive act, just as any other state would have done.39

Overall the chapters in part IV offer a better understanding of the Armenian tragedy because they combine a detailed examination of four important phases. First, the Armenian Reform Project of 1914. Second, the ARF's Eighth General Congress and the negotiations between the CUP representatives and the ARF leadership in Erzurum just afterward. Third, the formation of Armenian volunteer units and their insurgency against the Ottoman military. Fourth, the process through which relocation turned into massacres of Armenian civilians.

Ahmet Seyhun offers close readings of the reform project. His chapter significantly notes that the Ottoman Empire became more suspicious of Russian designs regarding the region and the loyalty of the Armenians as a community after the agreement. By 1914 Russia's main goal was to occupy the Straits and eastern Anatolia. The Russian navy was not yet ready for the task of occupying Istanbul, however, which delayed the

Russian occupation in the eastern provinces: Russian policymakers did not want to provoke a premature partition in which Istanbul could end up in different hands. Yet Russia managed to get other major powers to recognize the eastern Ottoman provinces as its own sphere of influence. Seyhun's chapter displays the process through which the Armenian elite tried to turn Ottoman weakness in the Balkan Wars into an opportunity by pushing for a reform backed by Russian support. This resulted in a series of reactions to the Reform Project.

One of these was the Bitlis uprising in 1914, examined in Tibet Abak's chapter, which argues that the uprising was reflective of the public reaction to the reform schemes and how Russia tried to exploit this discontent on the part of the Kurds against the Ottoman state. ⁴¹ By utilizing the Russian consulate reports from Bitlis as contemporary accounts, this study reveals the Kurdish political structure in the Ottoman Empire after the turn of the century.

Garabet Moumdjian's detailed chapter examines the relations between the CUP and the ARF by focusing on the decisions reached in the ARF's Eighth General (World) Congress in Erzurum. The congress took place in the same month (July 1914) in which Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia and major powers were all in the process of general mobilization. After the congress negotiations were held between representatives of the ARF and the CUP. This was the last attempt to keep the two sides engaged in conversation. Moumdjian raises the question of why certain ARF leaders who had been cooperating with the Ottoman leadership took a pro-Russian stance in October 1914 by forming and deploying the Armenian Volunteer Units.

By utilizing the Russian and the Ottoman archives, Onur Önol also looks into the relations between the CUP and the ARF during the ARF's Eighth Congress in Erzurum. Önol's emphasis is on the ARF's declaration of neutrality as compared to its later actions. The question regarding the Armenian position in the event of war between Russia and the Ottoman Empire was met by an agreement to remain neutral and perform the military duties as demanded by each country. Some historians have questioned the sincerity of these statements and argued that the congress in actuality decided to take a pro-Russian approach. Önol rejects these claims and argues that no evidence supports the Ottoman military intelligence reports, which concluded that the ARF was set to support the Russian war efforts. For Önol, the ARF's rejection of the CUP request that it incite a rebellion in the Caucasus against Russia does not mean that the Armenian leadership necessarily rushed to form an alliance with

Russia. But the ARF's rejection of the CUP's offer of autonomy in return for support during the war against Russia did lead the CUP to conclude that the ARF was pro-Russian.

The visible cooperation between the Armenian volunteers and the Entente powers drove the Ottoman officials to relocate the Armenian population (except in Istanbul and İzmir). Justin McCarthy's chapter examines an example of this cooperation. The local Armenians in the Cilicia region invited British military intervention so that they might carve their own region under Entente support. In this particular case the British did not consider the invitation seriously, but the Armenian position was well articulated. The Armenian insurgency was one of the most important security challenges for the Ottoman military because the Armenians were located in logistical nodes. They made regular attacks on the railroads and telegraph lines. The Ottoman military had to develop a series of strategies to deal with the insurgency.

Kemal Çiçek's chapter examines the military reasons for the deportation of the Armenian population. Indeed the reasons for the relocation of the Ottoman Armenians from the war zone and then from all of Anatolia to the southern provinces of today's Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon have been the subject of long-standing debate among Ottoman historians. Although Ottoman military historians insist that security was the key motive in the decisions, a group of genocide scholars identify Turkish nationalism, a nationalist project of demographic engineering, or Islamic ideology as the motive. Relying on the evidence revealed by the documents in Ottoman Archives (opened to researchers very recently) Ciçek's study maintains that security was the main concern influencing the Ottoman government's decision. After the Armenians established volunteer units under Russian command and engaged in very successful insurgency tactics against the weak Ottoman army, the Ottoman military decided to remove Armenians as part of a general effort to keep civilians away from war zones and to prevent the Armenian population from following their leaders into operating as a fifth column.

Those who seek to explain the reason for the deportation on the basis of Turkish nationalism or the implementation of a policy of ethnic homogenization assume that Turkish nationalism and a nation-state building ideology were dominant before World War I. That is how virtually all secondary literature and memoirs—Turkish and foreign—portray Unionist rule, but at its best this is reading history backward. It suited foreign sources during World War I to portray the Unionists as nationalists for their own political reasons. If the situation is scrutinized

through contemporary sources, however, we find that the Unionists were overwhelmingly Ottomanist virtually to the very end of the war. Hasan Kayalı's book about Arabs and Turks during the Young Turk period goes some way in debunking the idea of the Unionists as nationalists and establishing them as Ottoman Islamists.

John Reed's chapter reveals that the use of violent deportation as a key strategy against insurgency was far more common than some historians recognize. 42 He measures the usefulness of the current counterinsurgency theory for the analysis of early twentieth century internal security campaigns, with particular reference to the Ottoman Empire's removal of its Armenian population from the eastern provinces of Anatolia in 1915–16. Reed argues that the strategy of relocation was widely utilized during the early twentieth century to remove civilian populations who were believed to be supporting insurgents. Relocation was the gravest of all counterinsurgency techniques because it totally undermined the legitimacy of the government in the eyes of the deported population. It usually becomes much worse for the deported population if the state has no resources to carry out relocation and decides to "contract out" the removal to "loyal" local actors who perceive and act on incentives to commit indiscriminate violence. In the Ottoman case this lack of resources and personnel meant that a limited security force carried out the deportations. The Armenian convoys became regular targets of Kurdish tribes. 43 Reed's analysis of counterinsurgency adds an important dimension to the ongoing debate over the processes of relocation. Although most genocide scholars argue that the Ottomans had neither a premeditated plan nor a clear ideology of hatred, in their understanding the process of relocation led to ethnic cleansing and to genocidal massacres. For most Ottoman historians, however, the intent was not to destroy the Armenian population. Reed's focus on Ottoman security solidifies their findings from the perspective of military terminology.

Ramazan Erhan Güllü tries to articulate the general political mood of the Armenian elite and in particular reconcile conflicting statements made by Zaven der Yeghiaian, the Istanbul Armenian patriarch, at the beginning of the war. Through the study of memoirs, Güllü argues that many Armenian thinkers and patriarchate officials perceived the war as an opportunity that would pave the way for Armenian independence. The new legal structure that resulted from the tense political conditions prompted the move of the patriarchate to Jerusalem and also led to dismissal of Patriarch Zaven. This new structure was designed to cut the connection between the Ottoman Armenians and the catholicos of all Armenians in Etchmiadzin, which was under Russia's control. Güllü

puts forth the argument that the major changes in the role of the patriarch were symbolic of a great transformation in the socioeconomic landscape of Anatolia. The removal of Armenians from their homes and landstransferred significant resources in favor of the suddenly emerging Anatolian Muslim economic elite.

In his chapter Oya Gözel Durmaz analyzes the transforming effects of World War I on localities. Kayseri is the selected case-study area because of its demographic composition before the war. According to the 1914 population census, 20 percent of Kayseri's total population was Armenian and 10 percent was Greek. Therefore the demographic change brought about by the war highly influenced the city's social and economic life. Gözel examines how the Armenian deportations affected the social and economic structure of Kayseri.

The conflict in Anatolia was fought over territory and the sharing of state sovereignty. Unresolved territorial aspirations play a big role in sustaining a strong sense of conflict, even to this day. This explains the novels written by the Armenian migrants, who immediately after the war sought to establish a memory so that political claims of victimization could be issued. Over time the quality of Armenian group cohesion has grown more dependent on a reconstruction of history. This sense of victimization coupled with unfulfilled political desires has manifested itself in violent attempts to administer justice.

Christopher Gunn addresses this important topic, which goes beyond the time frame of World War I, and examines the killings of Ottoman statesmen by Armenian avengers, who after 1918 sought justice for the events of 1915 in eastern Anatolia. For example, between March 1921 and April 1922 Armenians operating in Berlin, Rome, Tbilisi, and Istanbul assassinated Talat Paşa and Cemal Paşa, along with other prominent government officials that Armenians held personally accountable for the organization and implementation of the massacres. Known as Nemesis, this operation was orchestrated by members of the ARF in the United States. In the Armenian community itself the individuals involved in these attacks have been honored, idolized, and lauded as heroes, avengers, and defenders of the Armenian cause. Gunn explores the links between these two periods of violence and argues that the benign international response to the murders of 1921-22 facilitated and sustained a cult of self-righteous violence within the Armenian diaspora that tragically resurfaced in January 1973.

Tal Buenos draws attention to the significant involvement of third parties in national conflicts. Despite the prevalence of claims against Germany's complications role in the suffering of many Armenians in World War I by way of association with the perceived perpetrators, he argues that it was Britain—led by James Bryce's political opportunism and anti-Turkish prejudice—that had a larger impact on the catastrophe as a Great Power third party through association with the perceived victims. Britain intentionally encouraged Armenians to provoke the Turks and intensify the conflict, thereby forcing Ottoman authorities into viewing the Armenian communities as a security threat. To this day Armenians are disinterested in examining British responsibility, because the Armenian national narrative owes its very existence to Bryce and British propaganda. A reexamination would mean having to recognize that it was Bryce—rather than the paşas—who intended to create a Turco-Armenian confrontation.

Şükrü M. Elekdağ examines whether the acts of the Ottoman government or its members can validly be characterized as genocide in light of the provisions of the United Nations Genocide Convention interpreted in accordance with the established precedents and jurisprudence. His analysis leads to a conclusion that the material and mental elements of the alleged crime cannot be established, so the accusation of the crime of genocide against the Ottoman administration and its members is invalid and without reasonable foundation. This chapter argues that the relocation of elements of ethnic Armenian communities away from certain regions of Anatolia, conducted by the authorities with a full sense of responsibility and taking all possible precautions to carry it out in a safe and orderly manner, was a legally justifiable measure when taken by the state in order to protect its very existence.

Hakan Özoğlu's chapter utilizes Gen. Mark Lambert Bristol's report found in the United States archives and offers an interesting view of the events in Anatolia. Özoğlu shows the significance of such a report, when considering the gap in American public opinion between the image of the Turk and Turkey on the one hand and the image of the Ottoman Christians, especially the Armenians, on the other hand. He argues that a number of reports, including General Bristol's, tried to provide more objective information about the situation in Anatolia. Özoğlu's main goal is to draw a picture of post–World War I Anatolia seen through the eyes of American diplomats and, by doing so, call attention to the importance of consulting the different diplomatic and special reports.

The chapters in this section also indicate the gap between memory and historiography. Although historiography is based on facts and reconstruction of the lived experience, memory is the selective use of the past for the formation of contemporary identities. The Armenian com-

munities today remember the war as genocide and seek to build modern Armenian identity within the discourse of genocide. This allows some Armenian communities to avoid facing history and historical facts, especially the miscalculations of the Armenian political leadership. Today "being Armenian" is structured around feeling the painful stories of World War I. Memories rather than history thus have provided the basis of genocide discourse.

PART V. THE BALKANS AND WORLD WAR I

The conflicts in the Balkans between 1878 and 1914 were "an extended attempt to change [the provisions of the Treaty of Berlin], often by violence."44 Indeed the Treaty of Berlin, which was imposed on the Ottoman Empire after the devastating Ottoman-Russo War of 1877-78, was a formative document that helped to create a new normative system the creation of homogeneous Christian states through the expulsion of Muslims. 45 The provisions of the Treaty of Berlin planted the seeds of future conflicts by unleashing irredentist nationalism and creating geopolitical insecurity for the Ottoman state. The competition in the Balkans over the Ottoman territorial losses led to imperial rivalries between Austria-Hungary and Russia. The local nationalist groups, especially the Serbian irredentists, exploited these imperial rivalries in order to maximize their nationalist interests. Moreover, the media coverage of the war that followed the communal atrocities helped to bolster the already prevalent image of the "terrible Turk" in the European mind. The renewal of this imagery, in turn, formed the necessary political and moral ground to expel the Turks from the Balkans. British politician and former prime minister William E. Gladstone captured the dominant elite and public ideas of Turcophobia and Islamophobia in the following statement:

Let me endeavour, very briefly to sketch, in the rudest outline what the Turkish race was and what it is. It is not a question of Mohammedanism simply, but of Mohammedanism compounded with the peculiar character of a race. They are not the mild Mohammedans of India, nor the chivalrous Saladins of Syria, nor the cultured Moors of Spain. They were, upon the whole, from the black day when they first entered Europe, the one great antihuman specimen of humanity. Wherever they went a broad line of blood marked the track behind them, and, as far as their dominion reached, civilization vanished from view. They represented

everywhere government by force as opposed to government by law.—Yet a government by force can not be maintained without the aid of an intellectual element.—Hence there grew up, what has been rare in the history of the world, a kind of tolerance in the midst of cruelty, tyranny and rapine. Much of Christian life was contemptuously left alone and a race of Greeks was attracted to Constantinople which has all along made up, in some degree, the deficiencies of Turkish Islam in the element of mind!⁴⁶

In fact all conflicts and wars in the Balkans aimed for ethnic and religious cleansing of Muslims from the region. The rebel leaders all played into this dehumanized image of the barbarous Turk to justify their killings and bring about European intervention on their side to defeat the Ottoman state. The images that helped to dehumanize the Muslims played a key role in the mobilization of the Italian public against the Ottoman state in 1911 and also in the Balkans before and during the Balkan Wars of 1912–13.

As a result of the Tripolitanian War of 1911 Italy occupied the Ottoman provinces of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica as well as the Dodecanese Islands. Valerie McGuire's chapter examines how Italian ambition to become a major power through the acquisition of colonial territories shaped its foreign policy toward the Ottoman state. McGuire directly deals with the question of Italy's role in shaping the social and political post-Ottoman map of the Mediterranean during World War I. She focuses in particular on the Dodecanese archipelago, a chain of ethnically Greek islands that Italy had illegally occupied since the Italian-Turkish War. These islands became the site for experimenting with new models of colonial governance and citizenship that Italy would eventually implement in its other colonial territories and that corresponded to its anti-Turkish policy. The chapter also exposes some of the stereotypes of Turks and shows how Turks became a foil for Italy's insecurities about being "backward" and the crisis of modernity that resulted from the late formation of the Italian nation-state (1861) and its lack of colonies in the nineteenth century, connected with its marginal position in Great Power politics.

After the defeat of the Ottoman armies in Libya the Balkan states, with the help of Russia, came together against the Ottomans and also to contain the influence of Vienna. The Balkan Wars further destabilized the region. The alliance system that emerged after the Second Balkan War in 1913 was preserved during World War I. This shows that the

new state system created as a result of weakening of the Ottoman state in the Balkans did not bring peace but rather prepared a ground for new wars. In other words, some of the origins of World War I are rooted in the Treaty of Berlin and the wars fought to create a nation-state system in the region.

Tamara Scheer examines the Habsburg occupation policy toward Balkan Muslims during World War I. She analyzes three interrelated issues: how the perception of the Ottoman state as an enemy changed to seeing it as an ally; what factors informed Austria-Hungary's policy toward the Muslim population of the Balkans; and why the Muslim population closely cooperated with Austria-Hungary.

Olsi Jazexhi's chapter examines the process of independence and nation-building in Albania. Jazexhi argues that the declaration of independence and the definition of citizenship did not reflect the sociological realities on the ground, as the diverse ethnic, regional, and religious groups defined themselves by their local identities. The process of Albanization of the population was pursued by the Austro-Hungarians, the Italians, and the French during their invasion of Albania throughout World War I. This chapter analyzes factors like education and religious institutions such as mosques and churches as well as public opinion and the media and the impact that they had on shaping secular or religious imagined communities in post-Ottoman Albania. Islam for a long time remained the major source of identity in Albania.

Fikret Karčić's chapter analyzes why and how the Muslim population of Bosnia rallied around the jihad fatwa of the Ottoman sultan-caliph. The Ottoman jihad fatwas, which consisted of five legal opinions, justified the entry of the Ottomans into World War I and called on Muslims of the world to support the protection and preservation of Islam and the Ottoman state by fighting against the Entente powers. The Due to the multireligious nature of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Austria-Hungary tried to limit the effect and declaration of the fatwa to Muslim circles. Karčić makes an important contribution by examining the political effects of the Ottoman jihad fatwa in the local context of Bosnia.

Edin Radušić examines how the history of Bosnia and Herzegovina during the war was covered by the historiography of the former Yugoslavia. Radušić argues that the history of Bosnia and Herzegovina was very much subordinated to the context of the creation of Yugoslavia. In fact most of the historiography of the former Yugoslavia regarded World War I as a turning point in terms of liberating South Slavs from the dominance of imperialist powers and creating a progressive union among

South Slavs regardless of religion and regional differences. Radušić questions the dominant conclusions of this historiography by focusing on the following three questions. Was the end of Austro-Hungarian rule and the creation of the new Yugoslav state better for all of the peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina? Was the new state in its essence a Yugoslav state or a Serb state with wider Yugoslav names? Did the Serbian nationalists use the term "Yugoslav" to hide their own dominance?

As a part of the war settlement, a larger Romania and the new Serbian-dominated Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, Slovenia, and Montenegro (which was renamed Yugoslavia) were established. In a way Yugoslavia became a multiethnic and multireligious empire under the tight control of the Serbs. The new Yugoslav state maintained its unity, however, by nurturing local ethnic identities, which would eventually prevent the development of Yugoslav identity. Greece annexed Bulgaria's Aegean coastline but was defeated in Anatolia by the forces of Mustafa Kemal. The war resulted in the largest population exchange between Greece and Turkey at the suggestion of Greece, and a homogeneous Greece became a reality.

PART VI. ARAB PROVINCES OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

The Arab provinces of the Ottoman state became the major theater of imperialist rivalry that often further deepened the extant local cleavages. No event shaped the map of the Middle East as much as World War I. Most of the problems in the region are direct legacies of this bloody war and the corresponding diplomatic maneuvers. Germany wanted to utilize the Ottoman institution of the caliphate to bring about a global jihad against Britain, France, and Russia, while Britain co-opted some Arab tribal leaders by promising the creation of an independent Arab kingdom at the expense of the Ottoman Empire under the leadership of these tribal leaders, who were expected to initiate a general Arab uprising. The war, rather than becoming the beginning of a process of Arab nation-building, further localized identities and enhanced confessional and tribal boundaries. One of the key political effects of World War I on the Middle East was the creation of new states in order to serve the interests of the Entente powers, especially Britain and France, according to the Sykes-Picot Agreement of May 1916.

After the loss of the Balkan provinces and the deportation of the Muslims from the region, the Ottoman Empire had a Muslim majority. The CUP accordingly began to pursue more Islamic and Ottomanist policies in order to enhance its appeal. But the CUP's centralization policies to

reform the state and enhance the social cohesion among the Muslims had negative effects. The CUP took measures to undercut the power of local notables, improve bureaucracy through recruiting new educated professionals, require Turkish as the medium of instruction, impose universal military conscription on different groups, and establish a new taxation system. These measures deepened social and political discontent with the CUP. Britain and Russia would exploit this discontent during the war. In fact many scholars find the roots of Arab nationalism in this era of social and political discontent about the centralizing policies of the Ottoman state. For instance, some scholars seek to explain the transformation of "primordial Arab identity" into an Arab nation as the foundation of achieving Arab unity.

While many members of the bureaucratic and military elite in the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire were influenced by the embryonic ideas of Arab nationalism in the early years of the twentieth century, Peter Sluglett argues that these notions were embryonic because the strength and deep-rootedness of this nationalist movement have been greatly exaggerated after the fact. Little hard evidence indicates the movement's strength or "universality" before the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. Sluglett's conceptually guided and empirically rooted chapter reassesses some of the key myths about the origins of Arab nationalism. The commonly held myths cherished by many Arabs include the themes of an Ottoman voke, the four hundred years of tyranny that the Ottomans exercised over the Arab lands, and the struggle waged against the Ottomans by the Arab people from time immemorial. Sluglett argues that Arab nationalism was largely the invention of the Syrian/Iraqi ideologue Sati^c al-Husri (1882–1968), director of education first in Iraq (1921–27) and then in Syria (1943–47), in the 1920s and 1930s. Al-Husri was a prolific writer of history textbooks used by schools throughout the Arab world.

Orçun Can Okan complements the picture by focusing on the memoirs of leading Arab Ottomans to construct the Arab perspectives on World War I. These six memoirs represent different sociopolitical and geographical backgrounds from the Arab provinces. The memoirs of 'Abdullah b. al-Husayn, Shakib Arslan, Muhammad Kurd 'Ali, Salim 'Ali Salam, 'Izzat Darwaza, and Ja'far al-'Askari map out diverse perspectives on World War I. This chapter also addresses a major methodological question about the reliability and usefulness of memoirs in writing history. In light of the changes in the region after the conclusion of the war, Okan problematizes the utilization and reliability of memoirs as a historical source. After the war most of the memoirs sought to promote what

the writer wanted the readers to remember. The memoirs all attempt to shape collective memory. The tension between history and memory is fully reflected in this chapter, because each writer sought to enhance his present political position through his memoir.

One of the most theoretical chapters of this volume deals with the question of historiography. By criticizing the existing historiography as "Eurocentric, nation-centered, apologetic, or triumphalist," Hasan Kayalı aptly argues that very little effort was made to recognize Ottoman agency before and during the war. 48 The most original aspect of the chapter is the analysis of the consequences of "genocidizing" late Ottoman studies: reducing the history of the war to the Armenian "genocide." This has several implications: relocating the origins of Turkish nationalism to the origins of the development of the CUP; identifying Turkish nationalism and pan-Islamism as the twin motivating forces for entry into World War I and also as the cause of violence in Anatolia; linking German officials who were active during the war with the Holocaust to create a connection between the massacres of Armenians and the Holocaust; and treatment of the killings of the Christians in Anatolia as a series of genocides. The larger message of this chapter is that the genocide scholarship distorts history and seeks to construct a new historiography on the basis of the outcome of the war. Kayalı convincingly demonstrates that Ottoman officials such as Cemal Paşa were trying to deepen Ottoman legitimacy through a series of projects in Syria. Thus the CUP was motivated by the idea of protecting and maintaining the Ottoman state, not creating a homogenous nation-state that essentially would come at its own expense.

Francesco Mazzucotelli examines the construction of the Lebanese nation out of competing and conflicting "imagined communities." Mazzucotelli situates the origins of state building in the autonomous system of government that had been implemented in Mount Lebanon from 1861 until its suspension in July 1915. Direct military administration and harsh suppression of political dissent ensued for almost three years, until the area was taken over by Anglo-French troops near the end of World War I. Mazzucotelli's chapter shows how the situation on the ground was much less clear-cut where there were several social cleavages: the tension between the powerful pro-Ottoman groups versus anti-Ottomans and the critical tension between families of traditional landlords and the emerging bourgeoisie. While the local Ottoman government was functional and accessible to all sectors of the population, the CUP's policies of centralization and modernization had unexpected consequences in the periphery and mobilized traditional power brokers against the party. Even

though the period of World War I was framed as the era of the birth of a new nation in the modern historiography of Lebanon, the new political system created after the war remained more rigid and less accessible for all sectors of the population.

Iran became a victim of World War I, a conflict that almost led to the disintegration of the country in civil war and to loss of sovereignty to Britain. Iran's unwilling involvement was due to the British and Russians. Eric Hooglund discusses the impact on Iran of alliance between Britain and Russia against Germany and the Ottoman Empire during World War I. Since 1911 Russian forces had occupied all the main towns of northwestern Iran (Azerbaijan Province) and northern Iran (Caspian Sea province of Gilan and east into Khorasan), which bordered Ottoman Turkey on the west and the Russian Empire on the north. The British in turn were occupying southeastern Iran (bordering British India), with a recent special interest in the southwestern province of Khuzestan, which bordered the Ottoman Empire on the west and the British-dominated Persian Gulf coast of the Arabian Peninsula on the south. This new interest was due to a British subject having discovered oil in Khuzestan in 1908. He held an exclusive concession to prospect for, extract, and sell any oil. In early 1914 the British government purchased a controlling share of this company and its refining and production facilities. By 1915 Iranian Azerbaijan had became a battleground for Russian and Ottoman forces, while Iranian guerrilla groups in different parts of the country organized against the British and Russian troops. The guerrillas were often supported by the gendarmerie, whose Swedish officers were sympathetic toward the Germans. After the war Britain proposed a treaty, which would have transformed Iran into a British protectorate. The Iranian government's perceived willingness to acquiesce to the treaty provoked uprisings and autonomy movements throughout the country during 1919, with the Jangali movement even declaring a Soviet Socialist Republic in Gilan.

PART VII. MEMORIES AND LEGACIES OF WORLD WAR I

The people of modern Turkey usually have shared their experiences of uprootedness, which has played a formative role in the construction of Turkish national identity. The defeats, withdrawals, and persecution of Ottoman Muslim communities not only deepened rage but also helped to form a feeling of inferiority and a total lack of confidence. The Turks hated being semicolonized and weak and wanted to find security

in what they saw as their rightful identity in the future by becoming European. As the Turks tried to become more European in the nineteenth century they became more hated and "otherized" by the imperialist powers of Europe. After the Balkan defeats, Istanbul's cultivated sense of injustice and determination to preserve the homeland and sovereignty became infused with the feeling of loneliness. The Ottoman elites were fully aware that their country desperately needed to ally with a major European power in order to survive. But this sense of siege and inferiority complex was shattered by the successful resistance of the Turkish military under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal. After 1923 the new regime used all means to restore the self-confidence and dignity of the Turks by zealously fighting at the postwar settlement conferences to protect and preserve the full sovereignty of the Republic of Turkey. Since the latter part of the twentieth century, however, with the deportation of Bulgarian Turks in 1989 and the genocide in Bosnia, Turkey has been experiencing the return of repressed memory. This in turn has aided the reconstitution of the perfect and powerful Ottoman and Islamic identity. Turkey is searching for what was lost. But this search is more a matter of present and future power politics than an attempt to understand the past.

Today Turkishness is based on the shared history and rooted in Islamic and Ottoman events. Turks shared similar memories of persecution, massacres, and rape. This memory silently constituted the content of modern Turkish nationalism and the Sèvres syndrome. In the construction of Turkish nationalism, however, Ottomanism and Islamism played a constitutive role, especially after millions of Muslims were forced from their homes in the Balkans and Caucasus, increasing the emotional aspect of nationalism. Thus the nexus of collective suffering, the loss of homeland, memory, identity, and political activism needs to be situated within its own historical context. For many displaced Muslims life before expulsion became a reference point to examine life after the deportation. During interviews in Bayburt with several families whose ancestors came from the Caucasus during World War I, it became clear that they all had terrible stories from their grandfathers about war-related trauma and had decided to settle in different villages rather than the same village in order to avoid their painful memories of the persecution at the hands of Russians. Indeed after the war family memories about the war-related traumas were usually reconstructed to highlight long-standing ethnic or religious conflicts. These memories help us to understand why Erzurum, Bayburt, and Kars became the hotbeds of Islamic and Turkish nationalism and remain the centers of right-wing nationalist discourse. Thus the

competing memories of the same war are both politicized. Divided memories between the Turks and Armenians compete with each other and orient the writing of the history of the two communities.

Alp Yenen argues that the Middle Eastern insurgents generally drew their cognitive map of action from the Young Turks. Their aims included the cultivation of Ottoman-Muslim nationalism; the political elite's adoption of komitadji-like methods and ideas (organizing and operating in secret societies committed to political violence with the purpose of promoting a form of militant patriotism); and casting the anti-imperialist popular struggle as a jihad. In this sense the Unionist factor means organizing an underground resistance movement against imperialism. In the aftermath of the 1877-78 defeat the Young Turk movement rose to fill the space of a dormant, antiauthoritarian Abdülhamid II movement by calling for a new Ottoman-Islamic political consciousness. It would be a mistake to present the Young Turks only as an anti-Hamidian movement. They were a product of long expectations of modernizing the state through a constitutional system and rejuvenating society through a series of reforms. Due to the ongoing contemporary Islamist reconstruction of the Hamidian period, the CUP has come to represent an anti-Ottoman and pronationalistic movement that rejected Islamic traditions. The current dominant historiography totalizes the CUP identity and ignores various strains in terms of its Ottoman, Islamic, and Rumeli identities. Yenen pursues a richer understanding of these trends and puts forth a convincing argument that the CUP was more nuanced than the simplistic image of ethnonationalistic political party that some Islamist scholars and genocide analysts frequently present. The return of memory, especially the persecution of the Muslims in the Balkans, has highlighted memory sites such as the Dardanelles.⁴⁹

Mehmet Arisan's chapter tries to demonstrate the impact of World War I on the process of constructing a modern nation and society in Turkey by utilizing literary narratives written during and just after the war. Apart from the vast literature of national heroism and various tragedies, the chapter focuses on three basic points. One is the paradoxical representation and perception of the West as an enemy or as an example of sociopolitical and cultural perfection. Second is the emergence of Anatolia as a homeland that was in fact a small remainder of a huge empire and an exact demarcation of a catastrophic loss. Third is the significance of a certain silence toward such a loss or a particular repression of its effects, which resurfaced at various paradoxical points within the discourses of building a modern nation and society. Arisan's main aim is not

to generalize a definition of Turkish modernity by referring to the trauma of World War I but to reveal certain paradoxes in the Turkish understanding of social and political modernity by referring to some recurring themes and similar points in various narratives. This may well serve to reconceive some irreconcilable tensions and conflicts of modern Turkish politics.

Gencer Özcan and Özüm Arzık deal with the variations in the Republican commemoration of the Gallipoli War of 1915. Although the Ottoman troops had huge losses at Gallipoli, the battle is commemorated every year as the victory of the Turks against the imperialist powers. The secular groups usually stress Gallipoli to highlight the role of Mustafa Kemal, who was one of the major commanders of the war, while the Islamic groups focus on Gallipoli to recognize the power of Ottoman Islamic resistance against the West. Özcan and Arzık's chapter offers a nuanced analysis of how the war has been politicized and defined by diverse groups and how this in turn shapes the commemorations.

Kezban Acar examines the memoirs of the White Russians who fled Russia after the Communist revolution. A great number of these refugees came to Istanbul. In November 1920 Moda Bay in Istanbul contained 126 ships/cruisers/boats, carrying about 146,000 people. Approximately 60,000 of these refugees were military personnel of the White/Wrangel Army. The rest were Russian civilians. While the civilians were resettled in refugee camps in and around Istanbul, the White Army corps was settled in Lemnos, Mudros, and Gallipoli. This chapter, based on memoirs of the White refugees and Russian archival as well as secondary sources, draws a picture of post-World War I Istanbul. While explaining living conditions of the Russian refugees and the hardships that they suffered, both memoirs and Russian sources also provide valuable insight into social, economic, political, and cultural life in Istanbul in the early 1920s. The Whites' Istanbul was in many ways a post-World War I city, an imperial capital under Allied occupation, full of refugees and in social and economic chaos. Examining the economic, social, and cultural facets of the White Russians' stay in the early 1920s leads to invaluable understanding of conditions in Istanbul after World War I.

Francesco Caccamo's chapter is about the Ottoman question at the Paris Peace Conference (1919–20). During the war members of the Entente had reached a series of agreements concerning not only the Arab territories of the Empire but also its Anatolian core and the fundamental region of Istanbul and the Straits. The signing of the Treaty of Sèvres in August 1920 represented an apparent triumph for the British. The Greeks received full sovereignty over Thrace up to the lines of Çatalca

and temporary control over İzmir and western Anatolia, while the Armenians were granted the right to an independent state. Even the fate of Istanbul was endangered by the maintenance of Allied military occupation and by the provision that Turkish sovereignty over the city would be conditional on respect for its minorities. As many were aware, however, these decisions were based on extremely fragile foundations, considering the strength gained by the Turkish resistance and the divisions among the Allies. The Turkish resistance movement had emerged by May 1919, in response to the surrender of the Ottoman state and the Allied occupation of Istanbul and Anatolia. Mustafa Kemal was providing the impetus and leadership for its development into a militarily effective organization of national resistance.

The last chapter, by Senadin Musabegović, offers a new theoretical reading of the war by stressing the role of legitimacy and the evolution of a new normative order. He provides insights into the disintegration and breakdown of the war through poetic description in order to understand the historical period that gave birth to totalitarian tendencies. His chapter shows the crisis of legitimacy inherent in the emergence of new Balkan states that sought to produce nations through wars. With the fall of the Austro-Hungarian Empire as well as the Russian and Ottoman Empires a whole series of states tried to legitimize their military campaigns with the nationalism formula of building new nations through myths invented about a heroic past more or less based on the logic of "blood and land" and to create unity with symbols to unite the imagined community according to some collectivist moral imperative.

In conclusion, Ottoman society lived through the devastating consequences of the ten-year-long war. Its institutions, practices, moral norms, and family structures all were compromised and altered as a result of these experiences. After the collapse of the Ottoman state the legacy of the war was the emergence of a set of highly traumatized communities that were subjected to British and French colonial schemes. The modern map of the Middle East is accordingly the direct legacy of the end of the Ottoman Empire. The destruction of the Ottoman order planted the seeds of the future conflicts across the region. The war left a number of dispossessed communities with deep scars, particularly as a result of forced population movements out of the Balkans, Caucasus, and Aegean islands. After 1923 Mustafa Kemal and his colleagues would meld these communities into citizens of the new Turkish nation. At the end of the war in late 1918, however, Turkey was a country of widows, older men, and orphans without a functioning economy, infrastructure, or even state institutions.

NOTES

- 1. Talat Paşa cited in H. S. W. Corrigan, "German-Turkish Relations and the Outbreak of War in 1914," 147.
- 2. Hew Strachan, The First World War, 651.
- 3. Ibid., 652.
- M. Hakan Yavuz, "The Transformation of 'Empire' through Wars and Reforms"; Richard Hall, "Balkan Wars."
- 5. Harry N. Howard, The Partition of Turkey.
- 6. This is based on the view that Germany did not trust that Austro-Hungarian military capabilities were sufficient for a successful war engagement in the Balkans and therefore could not have pressed for this campaign. Furthermore, when considering German rationality in the context of the untested condition of the Austro-Hungarian military, the prospect of facilitating another Russian victory in the Balkans would have appeared too risky.
- 7. Feroz Ahmad, "Ottoman Perceptions of the Capitulations, 1800–1914."
- 8. Jeremy Salt, The Unmaking of the Middle East, 56.
- 9. Zafer Toprak, "Cihan Harbi'nin Provası."
- 10. Stanford J. Shaw, The Ottoman Empire in World War I, 1:618-25.
- 11. Nezir-Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 184.
- 12. D. H. Barlow, Anxiety and Its Disorders.
- 13. Paul Mojzes, Balkan Genocide.
- 14. Søren Kierkegaard, The Concept of Dread.
- Salt, The Unmaking of the Middle East, 50-56; Eyal Ginio, "Mobilizing the Ottoman Nation during the Balkan Wars (1912-1913)."
- Justin McCarthy, Death and Exile, 164; Ahmet Halaçoğlu, Balkan Harbi Sırasında Rumeli'den Turk Göçleri (1912–1913).
- 17. Zeki Arıkan, "Balkan Savaşı ve Kamuoyu."
- 18. Chapter 1 in this volume.
- 19. Stanford J. Shaw, *The Ottoman Empire in World War I*, vol. 1; Mustafa Aksakal, *The Ottoman Road to War in 1914*.
- Michael A. Reynolds, Shattering Empires; Mehmet Beşikçi, The Ottoman Mobilization of Manpower in the First World War.
- 21. Handan Nezir-Akmeşe, The Birth of Modern Turkey, 155-77.
- 22. For two of the best essays on the Ottoman entry into World War I, see Yuluğ Tekin Kurat, "How Turkey Drifted into World War I"; and Şuhnaz Yılmaz, "An Ottoman Warrior Abroad."
- 23. Taner Akçam, From Empire to Republic; Taner Akçam, "Ermeni Meselesi Hallol-unmuştur." For criticism of Akcam's book, see Fuat Dündar, "Taner Akçam'ın son kitabı vesilesiyle '%10 Katliam' Sorunu"; Fuat Dündar, Modern Türkiye'nin şifresi; and Donald Bloxham, The Great Game of Genocide. For the critique of the genocide thesis, see M. Hakan Yavuz, "Contours of Scholarship on Armenian-Turkish Relations."
- 24. The genocide scholarship also presents the Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa (Special Organization: SO) as the German SS. Halil Berktay, a professor of Sabanci University, whose interpretation of history can compete with any work of science fiction, blames the SO as the agent of genocide and compares Behaettin Şakir with

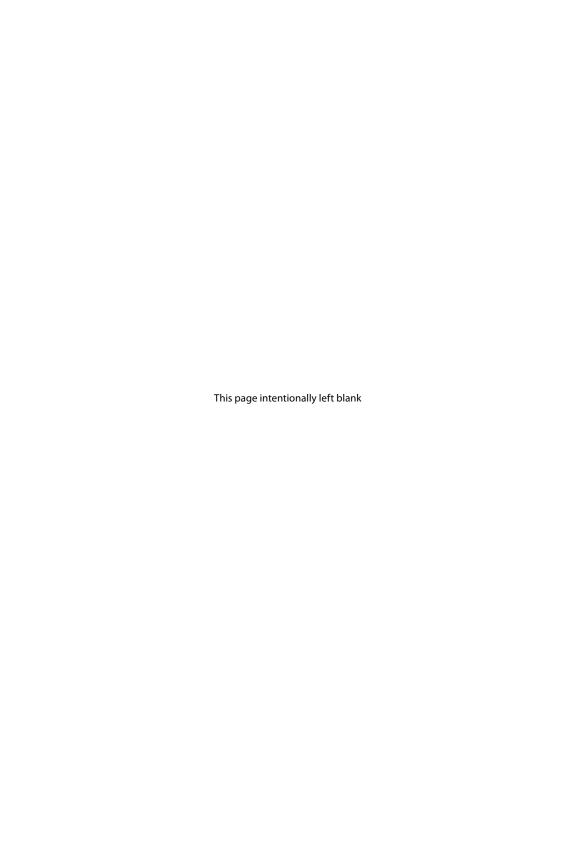
modern criminals such as Abdullah Catlı or Mahmut Yıldırım, known as Yeşil. Although Berktay is an interesting public intellectual, he has yet to produce a single scholarly work about the period. Most of his writings about World War I and the Armenian issue are polemical. For instance, see his interview with Neşe Düzel, *Radikal*, September 9, 2000. In his recent columns, however, he has been critical of the examination of the events of 1915 within the framework of genocide. Berktay charges that those who insist that the events of 1915 were a genocide are motivated either by careerism or by some financial gains. He still considers these events genocide but thinks that the concept of genocide is not helpful to understand what happened, why it happened, and how it happened. Berktay argues that "although the concept of genocide is also used by historians, it essentially belongs to the legal field and is part of the terminology of a lawyer or a prosecutor" (our translation); Halil Berktay, "Tarihsel gerçek, neden hukuktan daha önemli" (quotation); "İknacı bir Yol Haritası."

- 25. Edward J. Erickson, Defeat in Detail.
- 26. Reynolds, *Shattering Empires*, 45.
- Michael A. Reynolds. "Buffers, Not Brethren." See the nuanced article by Erik J. Zürcher, "The Vocabulary of Muslim Nationalism."
- 28. Kurat, "How Turkey Drifted into World War I," 293 (quotation); Ali İhsan Sabis, Harb Hatıralarım. General Sabis (1882–1957) was in Enver Paşa's circle. Sabis, like many Turkish officers, wanted to delay entry into the war until the spring of 1915.
- 29. For more on the CUP, see Feroz Ahmad, *The Young Turks*; Hasan Kayalı, *Arabs and Young Turks*; Erik J. Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building*.
- 30. Chapter 13 in this volume.
- 31. Most of the studies on the SO are either politicized or based on shaky evidence. In order to understand the rationale for the establishment of the SO, we need to situate the SO in the new emerging counterinsurgency strategies before World War I (see chapter 31 in this volume). Polat Safi argues that the mission of the SO was to "conduct asymmetric warfare to weaken enemy morale and fighting strength... and small-scale intelligence activity" (89). The SO was not an intelligence service but rather an organization to carry out counterinsurgency. Polat Safi, "History in the Trench"; Sadik Sarısaman, "Trabzon Mıntıkası Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa Heyet-i İdaresinin Faaliyetleri ve Gürcü Lejyonu"; Reynolds, Shattering Empires, 121.
- 32. Akdes Nimet Kurat, Türkiye ve Rusya.
- 33. Donald Bloxham, The Great Game of Genocide.
- 34. Anaide Ter Minassian, *Nationalism and Socialism in the Armenian Revolutionary Movement* (1887–1912), 19–20.
- 35. Taner Akçam, The Young Turks' Crime against Humanity.
- 36. The concern is mainly that Akçam's limited grasp of Ottoman Turkish may have led him to rely on selective translations of documents. See Tal Buenos, "Leading Historians Object to Taner Akçam's Anti-Methodical Construction of Armenian Memory"; Erman Şahin, "Review Essay."
- 37. Reynolds, Shattering Empires, 72-73.
- 38. Ibid., 26. The main Russian goal was to seize the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, along with Istanbul. Thus Russia used every opportunity to bloc Ottoman attempts to buy dreadnoughts from any country.
- 39. Edward J. Erickson, Ottomans and Armenians.

- 40. Zekeriya Türkmen, Vilayat-ı Şarkiye İslahat Müfestişliği.
- 41. Fatih Özdemir, The Effects of Tanzimat and Origins of Political Conflict between the Armenian and Kurdish Communities in the Ottoman Empire, 1839–1876.
- 42. Edward J. Erikson, "The Armenian Relocations and Ottoman National Security"; idem, "Captain Larkin and the Turks"; idem, "The Armenians and Ottoman Military Policy, 1915."
- 43. For one of the most detailed studies of the process of deportation, see Kemal Çiçek, *The Great War and the Forced Migration of Armenians*.
- 44. Andrew Baruch Wachtel, The Balkans in World History, 80.
- 45. M. Hakan Yavuz, "The Balkan Wars as a Catalyst of Homogenization."
- 46. William E. Gladstone, "Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East."
- 47. Reynolds, *Shattering Empires*, 122; Geoffrey Lewis, "The Ottoman Proclamation of Jihad in 1914."
- 48. Chapter 45 in this volume.
- 49. Gültekin Genç, II. Mesrutiyet'ten Cumhuriyet'e hatıralarda Ermeni Sorunu.
- 50. Edward J. Erickson, Gallipoli and the Middle East, 1914–1918; idem, Gallipoli: The Ottoman Campaign.

PART I

The Origins of World War I and the Ottoman Road to War



Inside the Doomsday Machine

The Great Powers on the Eve of 1914

Sean McMeekin

Histories of World War I take for granted the existence of two hostile power blocs in the years leading up to 1914: the Entente powers (France, Russia, and England, affiliated bilaterally with both) and the Triple Alliance or Central Powers (Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy). While a great deal of jockeying over the loyalties of "lesser" powers such as the Balkan states and Ottoman Turkey occurred, it was not hard for military planners to envision the belligerent coalitions likely to coalesce on the battlefield—were a Great Power war ever to break out—and to make their plans accordingly. The hostile power blocs, coupled with the rigidity of mobilization timetables, set in motion a kind of "doomsday machine," as Henry Kissinger, among many others, has called it.¹

In truth even the main power blocs were far from monolithic. England was nothing like a full member of the Entente. Tensions between London and Petersburg over a range of issues to do with Asia (especially Persia) were boiling over in 1914. France and Russia were much closer but even so felt friction over Turkish and Balkan affairs (owing to French foreign investments) and even over joint military planning against Germany. The French Left—victorious in the May 1914 elections—had deep misgivings about the Russian alliance writ large, which leading politicians like Joseph Caillaux and Jean Jaurès wanted to jettison entirely. Inside the so-called Triple Alliance, it was common knowledge that Italy and Austria-Hungary were hostile, owing to Italian designs on Trieste and the South Tyrol and general disagreement over Balkan issues. Even Germany and Austria clashed during the Balkan Wars of 1912—13. By 1914 the Hohenzollern and Habsburg sovereigns, Wilhelm II and Franz Josef I, were barely on speaking terms.

Outside the main blocs things were still more unpredictable. Owing in part to the personal relationship between Kaiser Wilhelm II and Sultan Abdülhamid II, Turkey had been loosely allied with Germany since the 1890s, while German officers trained the Ottoman army. During the Balkan Wars, however, Berlin did not offer Turkey even verbal support, in part because the kaiser's friend, Abdülhamid, had been deposed in 1909. In a painful snub Germany backed Greece's claim on Albania, while Russia, improbably, backed the Ottomans' claim. Meanwhile Bulgaria, a state literally created by Russian arms (whose officers had conducted joint exercises with the tsarist army for invading Turkey), had so frightened Petersburg during the Balkan Wars with its advance on Constantinople that it was now expected to join the Central Powers. Romania might go either way or stay neutral—depending on who made the best offer.

The fragile international equilibrium was disturbed by the murder of the heir to the Habsburg throne on June 28, 1914, but it was by no means certain that the "Sarajevo outrage" would lead to war—much less which powers would fight if it did so. Close examination of diplomatic correspondence during the July crisis reveals that the outbreak of World War I resulted more from contingent decisions than from firm alliance obligations. No "system" was at work that either functioned or broke down. It was human choice and human error that produced the catastrophe.

To unravel the skein of Great Power relations circa 1914 we could of course go all the way back to the last great conflagration, the Napoleonic Wars, and the Congress of Vienna that brought them to a close. But it seems more appropriate to begin with the Crimean War of 1853-56. Before this conflict the Concert of Europe or Metternich System functioned more or less on the basis of shared interests, with Austria, Prussia, and Russia working together to dampen or suppress all currents of liberalism or nationalism in Europe. Britain did not always share the ideological conservatism of the eastern powers—with their so-called Holy Alliance. Owing to Britain's own interest in maintaining a balance of power on the Continent and generally shoring up the status quo, it tended not to upset the diplomatic applecart. As late as 1848-49 the "system" had proved its mettle when Prussia's King Friedrich Wilhelm IV, with Russian encouragement, pulled the rug out from under the Frankfurt Parliament liberals who wanted to unify Germany under Prussian auspices. Russia had then sent troops to help Vienna suppress a Hungarian nationalist uprising, even as Austria's own troops crushed Italian rebels. Britain, true to form, stayed on the sidelines.

But two destabilizing consequences of the revolutions of 1848 together helped destroy Klemens von Metternich's system. One was Metternich's own fall, leaving Austrian diplomacy in the hands of the far less able Count Karl Ferdinand von Buol. The other was the election to the presidency of Napoleon III, the ambitious but much less talented nephew of the former emperor. The French president (and after 1852 emperor) viewed the Concert of Europe, originally set up in 1815 to contain France, as intrinsically anti-French and therefore plotted its destruction. The vehicle he chose, somewhat oddly, was an old French tie, dating back to the Crusades, to Levantine Christians. By staking a claim over Catholics in the Holy Land, Napoleon III knew that he would offend Russia's (exaggerated) claims of "protection rights" over Ottoman Christians dating back to the 1774 Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca. Russia's tsar, Nicholas I, took the bait, protesting this move and seeking redress at the Sublime Porte; when he did not get it, he occupied the "Principalities" (or, as we would call it, Romania). To the delight of France's emperor, Britain also took up the anti-Russian cause, which encouraged the Ottomans to declare war on Russia in September 1853. After Sardinia, France, and Britain joined the war in 1854, Austria's foreign minister, Count Buol, put the screws on Russia in 1855 by demanding that it withdraw troops from Romania. Just as Napoleon III had hoped (although it would be exaggerating to claim that he planned precisely this sequence of events), Austria's shocking about-face against its Russian ally effectively killed off the Metternich System, creating the enmity between Vienna and Petersburg that was one of the fundamental constants of European diplomacy up to 1914.

The Crimean War set up a kind of "Eastern Question" template or script, which we can follow in subsequent crises up to 1914. Ottoman "decline" or perceived weakness was a constant of all these crises, along with Russian ambitions in Turkey—which prompted hostility and/or countermeasures by the other powers, usually beginning (although not ending) with a jealous Austria. The unification of Germany after the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–71 added another constant: enmity between Paris (seeking to regain its lost provinces of Alsace-Lorraine) and Berlin. These constants—perceived Ottoman weakness, Russian expansionist ambitions, Austrian hostility to them, and Franco-German rivalry—were present in the Balkan crises of 1875–78, 1908–9, and 1912–13. Any of these can be seen as something like a dress rehearsal for the war that actually broke out in 1914.

Nevertheless, some variables ensured that none of these crises played out in quite the same way. Although the Balkan crisis of the 1870s led to a

Russo-Ottoman War in 1877–78, Bismarck's careful diplomacy—owing to his fear that Germany would be surrounded in any new Great Power war—helped ensure that it did not spread.

By brokering, with British help, a cynical quid pro quo between Austria and Russia that allowed Vienna to occupy (although not annex) the Ottoman province of Bosnia-Herzegovina in exchange for not intervening against Russia, Bismarck avoided a repeat of the clash over Romania in the Crimean War.

Likewise, the First Bosnian Crisis of 1908–9, prompted by Austria's unilateral annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, serious as it was, did not lead to war at all. Russia's foreign minister, Alexander Izvolsky, was badly routed in the affair by his Austrian counterpart, Count Alois Lexa von Aehrenthal. Izvolsky apparently thought that he had negotiated a secret quid pro quo in exchange for "allowing" the annexation to proceed: Vienna would support Russia's aim of revising the Berlin Treaty of 1878 to win free passage for its warships through the Straits. For this reason it is usually assumed that Russia's weakness, following its defeat by Japan in the war of 1904–5 and the subsequent Revolution of 1905, explained why it backed down in the face of a German threat indirectly made on behalf of Austria in March 1909. The idea seems to be that Berlin would "allow" Austria to threaten Serbia with invasion if Russia did not go along with the annexation.

Russia's temporary weakness is indeed part of the reason why the crisis was ultimately defused. It was not the only reason, however. In fact France, not yet confident enough in its military position against Germany and fearing for its huge investments in Ottoman, Russian, Serbian, and Bulgarian bonds (which might go up in smoke if a Balkan war broke out), refused to offer Russia even nominal backing. This left Russia isolated and Izvolsky humiliated. Aehrenthal, in fact, had been informed by his ambassador in Paris, Count Rudolf Khevenhüller, that France would do everything to preserve the peace, "as no one would profit from an armed clash." Had he not been sure that France would leave its Russian ally out to dry, Aehrenthal might never have gone ahead with the annexation.

As German and Austrian diplomats knew—and counted on—French investments abroad in the early twentieth century were strategically significant. Owing in part to a low birthrate and an aging population (which meant few young people to lend to at home), French men and women with cash to burn tended to invest their money—without prejudice, as indicated by how much they parked in both Turkey and Russia, two ancient enemies that had gone to war with each other as recently

as 1877–78. By the time the Bolsheviks repudiated all Russian loan and equity obligations in 1918, French investors and bondholders held nearly \$4 billion worth of Russian paper; an equivalent figure today would be about half a trillion dollars. French investments in the Ottoman Empire, while nowhere near this large, were still substantial—hundreds of millions of dollars. French bondholders and bankers indeed dominated the Caisse de la Dette Publique Ottomane, which exercised an effective veto power over Ottoman government spending and essentially ran Turkish public finance, including the collection of tariffs, taxes, and tolls (the notorious "Capitulations"). While French ties with Russia after the finalization of the Franco-Russian defensive alliance in 1894 were far closer and more binding than those with the Sublime Porte, French investments in both empires were now so important that France's Eastern Question policy circa 1908 was almost a reverse-mirror image of the policy of Napoleon III a half-century earlier. France wished to avoid war at all costs.

Russian diplomats, for their part, were just as reluctant to support France over African colonial questions as the French were to support Russian claims in the Near East. True, Germany overreached during the Moroccan crisis of 1905-6, when the kaiser was actually sent to Tangier in a blatant bit of diplomatic blackmail. This misstep was so egregious that France was able to solidify its new entente (1904) with England, with Russian support at the Algeciras conference of 1906 being merely incidental (Britain, Italy, Spain, and the United States also backed French claims). In July 1911, however, France's dispatch of troops from Casablanca to suppress rebels at Fez, followed by the dispatch of the German gunboat Panther to Agadir, gave Europe a real scare. With France angling for a full-on protectorate over Morocco, a standoff developed between Paris and Berlin that nearly tipped over into Great Power war. The British navy was put on high readiness, and the first serious discussions were inaugurated between Paris and London regarding naval cooperation against Germany. Still, France, despite the tempting prospect of British-backed revanche against Germany, backed down after finding no support in St. Petersburg. As the French ambassador there reported, "Russian public opinion would hardly understand a war occasioned by a colonial question like Morocco." ⁴ British backing would have been highly useful for France in a war with Germany, if the Russians invoked the casus foederis (case for the alliance) and invaded Germany. Without Russia on board, it was useless.

As for the Triple Alliance created by Otto von Bismarck in 1882, its centrifugal tendencies were even stronger than those inside the Franco-Russian alliance. Italy was ever an unwilling partner of Habsburg

Austria-Hungary, its traditional oppressor. When Italy made its own bid for "compensation" after the Second Moroccan Crisis, declaring war on the Ottoman Empire in September when the Porte refused to hand over Tripoli and Cyrenaica, it found no support in Vienna or Berlin. Austria's chief of army staff, Conrad von Hötzendorf, even proposed declaring war on Italy while its troops were engaged in Libya (for which suggestion he was fired, only to be reinstated in 1912). Austrian interests clashed with Italian over Trieste and the Tirol, over control of the Adriatic, and over the Balkans. With such unpromising material, it was all the Germans could do to keep Austria and Italy from going to war with one another. Cooperation between them on the battlefield was a fantasy.

As for Austria and Germany, the only lasting strategic interest that they truly had in common was containing Russia. The two powers had gone to war as recently as 1866, after all—it was only Bismarck's astute decision to negotiate after the Prussian victory at Königgratz that had prevented the Austro-Prussian War from leaving a legacy of enduring enmity and bitterness. Aside from the through lines of the Berlin-Baghdad railway connecting Germany to its investments in the Ottoman Empire, Germany had no real interests in the Balkans, the region that obsessed Vienna. Nor did the Austrians give a fig for German pretensions in Africa, which left Berlin effectively isolated during both Moroccan crises. Vienna and Berlin did cooperate closely during the First Bosnian Crisis in 1908–9, but that was because it revolved around Russia.

During the Balkan wars of 1912–13, by contrast, Vienna and Berlin drifted apart. Kaiser Wilhelm II's enthusiasm for the Ottomans evaporated after his friend Abdülhamid was deposed by the Young Turks in April 1909. Chancellor Bethmann Hollweg focused mostly on his goal of rapprochement with England, and the Germans stood aloof when the Balkan League of Montenegro, Serbia, Bulgaria, and Greece attacked Turkey in October 1912. Despite the grave threat that aggressive Balkan irredentism posed to his closest ally, the Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary, and the fact that the Ottoman army had been trained by the Germans and fought with German weapons, the kaiser made no effort to stave off the war or to intervene once it broke out. Germany's policy, he declared, was one of "free fight and no favor"—that is, Germany would sit the war out and watch it take its course.

In Vienna, meanwhile, the army chief of staff, Franz Xaver Josef Conrad von Hötzendorf, was almost apoplectic with war fever. One historian estimates that he proposed declaring war on Serbia twenty-five times in 1913 alone.⁶ Austria-Hungary did take precautionary military measures,

mostly in Galicia, on its northeastern front, facing Russia. The Russians, for their part, kept "third-year" conscript troops (normally scheduled for release) on active duty, adding the equivalent of more than an entire army (400,000 soldiers) to their active force. On November 23, 1912, at an emergency crown council at Tsarskoe Selo, Russia's war minister, V. A. Sukhomlinov, presented the tsar with orders for a "partial mobilization" against Austria-Hungary. Had the tsar signed them, even the kaiser might have mobilized against Russia. As he told the German state secretary, Alfred von Kiderlen-Wächter, on November 22, "should Russian counter-measures or protests ensue which force Emperor Franz Josef to begin war...I am ready...to apply the *casus foederis*." Luckily for the European equilibrium, the chair of Russia's Council of Ministers, V. N. Kokovstev, intervened to prevent Tsar Nicholas II from unleashing the European doomsday machine.

Still, although war had been narrowly averted in November 1912, this was due entirely to Russia's backing down—again, just as it had in March 1909. The kaiser would have been willing to support Austria if it were attacked by Russia—or if a Russian mobilization took on obviously hostile overtones, targeting Galicia. He was not willing, however, to support his ally if Austria itself threatened the equilibrium with any aggressive moves in the Balkans. In fact Russia's cautious attitude in the First Balkan War, even as the Serbs reached the Adriatic, the Greeks took Salonika, and the Bulgarians advanced to the Çatalca lines (just thirty-seven miles from Constantinople), convinced policymakers in Berlin that Austria should exercise caution too. When Austria's foreign minister, Count Leopold von Berchtold, sent an envoy to Berlin in January 1913 to canvass opinion in case Vienna moved against Serbia—a diplomatic move nearly identical to the famous Count Hoyos Mission of July 1914 (see the discussion below)—he came back empty-handed. Neither the kaiser nor the chancellor, he reported to Berchtold, "had any desire for a showdown with the Russians over a Balkan issue."8 If the Russians started a war with Austria over the Balkans, Germany was duty-bound to aid its ally. If the Austrians started the war, it was not.

Far from backing up his Austrian ally in the Balkans, by the second half of 1913 the kaiser seemed almost to be taking Serbia's side. During the Second Balkan War of 1913, when Berchtold at last summoned up enough spine to demand that the Serbs withdraw from Albania, it was the Russians (who did not want their Serbian client to become too powerful) who backed Vienna, not the Germans. The kaiser called Vienna's efforts to block Serbian access to the Adriatic "nonsense." When, in March 1914,

he learned that Austrian diplomats were angling to prevent Serbia from unifying with Montenegro (thereby reaching the Adriatic), Kaiser Wilhelm II erupted: "Unbelievable! This union is absolutely not to be prevented. And if Vienna attempts it, she will commit a great stupidity, and stir up the danger of a war with the Slavs, which would leave us quite cold." Berchtold and Franz Josef I were wholly and deeply committed to the "stupidity," which left the kaiser cold. As the Hungarian ministerpresident, István Tisza, warned an increasingly angry Franz Josef, any Austrian attempt to cut Serbia down to size would run up against "the Kaiser's preference for Serbia." 9

By the time of the Sarajevo outrage the kaiser's estrangement meant that Austria's diplomatic isolation was nearly complete. An old legend about his meeting with the Habsburg heir, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, at Konopischt in June 1914 says that some kind of plot for carving up eastern Europe supposedly was hashed out. No one believes this canard anymore—the kaiser and the archduke, we now know, talked mostly about Tisza and Hungary's mistreatment of its Romanians, which was stirring up tension with Bucharest. What is interesting about Konopischt, in retrospect, is the connection forged between the kaiser and the Austrian heir. Emperor Franz Josef I had fallen seriously ill with bronchitis in April. For a time there was a bona fide death watch, with Franz Ferdinand keeping a train under steam, ready to whisk him to Vienna on a moment's notice. Judging from the confidences shared at Konopischt, Kaiser Wilhelm II was hoping that a change of regime would soon occur, so that Austria-Hungary, under its new emperor, could pursue a more sensible policy in the Balkans, winning over the Romanians and calming down the Serbs.

Instead of taking over the throne, of course, Franz Ferdinand was murdered in Sarajevo on June 28, 1914, by a Bosnian Serb assassin, Gavrilo Princip (who, along with his fellow assassins, had backing from Belgrade). Although Princip himself was too simple to know it, in terms of rearranging the diplomatic deck for war he had committed the perfect crime. Franz Ferdinand was the most passionate opponent of the war party in Vienna and could no longer overrule Conrad, for the obvious reason that he was dead. More significantly, the murder of his good friend turned Germany's nervous, hesitating, Serbia-sympathizing Hamlet of a sovereign into a passionate Serb-hater overnight.

Something of the dramatic shift was captured in the marginalia that the kaiser wrote on the first telegram that he received from his ambassador in Vienna, Count Heinrich von Tschirschky, after the Sarajevo outrage. When Tschirschky, knowing his sovereign's inclination to lower the military temperature in the Balkans, learned that not only Conrad but even the normally cautious Berchtold wanted "a final settlement of accounts with the Serbs," he felt compelled, "calmly but very emphatically and seriously, to utter a warning against such hasty measures." Reading this while still enraged over the assassination of his friend, the kaiser scribbled: "That is utterly stupid! It is not his business...what Austria intends to do. Later on, if things went wrong, it would be said: Germany was not willing! Tschirschky will please drop this nonsense! Matters must be cleared up with the Serbs, and that *right soon*. That's all self-evident and the plain truth." ¹⁰

Of course, Kaiser Wilhelm II was known for these kinds of emotional outbursts, which often dissipated as quickly as they came. The key for the war party in Vienna was to pin him down into a declaration of support while he was still enraged over Sarajevo. This was the purpose of the Count Hoyos Mission to Berlin (July 5–6), which won just the blank check that Vienna was looking for. In a flash of diplomatic lightning, the stars had aligned for an Austrian strike against Serbia, as they had not done in 1912 or 1913. Conrad, it seemed, would get his war after all.

Although neither the Austrians nor the Germans knew this yet, the stars had aligned for their enemies as well. As recently as January 1914 Russia had backed down—again—in the so-called Liman von Sanders affair. A German officer had been appointed to command the Ottoman Straits Defenses, threatening Russia's most vital national interest, yearround warm-water access from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean Sea. (Otto Liman von Sanders was allowed to stay on but promoted to a rank rendering him "overqualified" to command the single Turkish army corps that guarded the Straits.) Just as in November 1912, the man who convinced the tsar not to mobilize was the conservative chair of the Council of Ministers, V.N. Kokovstev. For blocking the war party again,¹¹ Kokovstev was finally sacked in February and replaced by an elderly figurehead, I.V. Goremykin, widely seen as the creature of agriculture minister A. V. Krivoshein, who headed Russia's burgeoning war party. Although S. D. Sazonov, the foreign minister, was not known as a hothead, he was a national liberal, which in Russian circumstances meant that he was pro-French, anti-German, and pan-Slavist enough to take umbrage at any Austrian move against Serbia.

Sazonov was in many ways the liminal figure of the July crisis. He had gone along with Kokovstev in November 1912 and again in January 1914 and was seen by Krivoshein's crowd as timid, not unlike the way in which

the nervous kaiser was mistrusted by the war party in Berlin and Vienna. And yet, curiously, the Sarajevo outrage jolted Sazonov out of his passive funk no less dramatically than the kaiser was shocked into belligerency by the murder of his friend. In his initial meetings with Austrian diplomats Sazonov expressed no more than the bare minimum of sympathy. Russian diplomats in the Balkans reacted more coldly still. The tsarist legation in Belgrade declined to fly its flag at half-mast, even during the official funeral requiem for Franz Ferdinand, as if intentionally to insult his memory. Upon hearing that Austria suspected Belgrade of complicity in the crime (which turned out to be true), Sazonov threatened Otto Czernin, the Austro-Hungarian legation secretary: "Do not engage yourselves on that road; it is dangerous."

These were not idle words. Since February Serbia had been demanding that Russia send arms to replenish stocks depleted in the Balkan Wars. Just two days after Sarajevo, on June 30, 1914 (when Paris and London had barely woken up to the seriousness of the news from Sarajevo), Sazonov convinced the tsar to approve the dispatch of 120,000 three-line rifles, with 120 million rounds, to Belgrade. On the same day Sazonov dispatched a "very secret and urgent" request to Russia's naval minister, I. K. Grigorevich, for information regarding the war-readiness of Russia's Black Sea Fleet. Specifically he wanted to know what had been done since a secret planning conference in February to accelerate the dispatch of amphibious landing forces to the Bosphorus. The first Russian troops would now be able to land in the Bosphorus from M + 10 (mobilization day plus ten) to within "four or five days" of mobilization. "Whether or not Austria chose to strike against Serbia, Sazonov wanted Serbia's army—as well as Russia's navy—to be ready in case a European war broke out.

The French reaction to Sarajevo was nowhere near this belligerent, but circumstances were still dramatically more favorable for Franco-Russian collaboration in July 1914 than in any of the previous crises over the past few decades. By standing up to German bullying (as the French saw it) during the Moroccan crisis of 1911, French nationalists had launched a kind of *réveil national*, a political mood of nationalist awakening which allowed no more backing down against the Germans. That same year French military planners concluded that Russia's mobilization was so slow—with concentration on the eastern front not completed until M+30—that the alliance had little military value for Paris. Joint planning was then accelerated, with French capital poured into Russian railway construction, particularly in Poland, even while Russia's Great Program of 1913 expanded the size of Russia's peacetime army. France's

new mobilization Plan 17, buttressed by the expansion of the French peacetime army owing to the Three-Year Service Law passed in 1913, shifted its posture against Germany firmly to the offensive. Russia's new mobilization Plan 19 likewise envisioned offensives against both Austria and Germany, launched ideally as early as M+15, in conjunction with a French offensive against Alsace-Lorraine. The Russians themselves knew that they could not be ready this quickly. The conclusion of war gamers in Kiev on April 20–24, 1914, was that Russia would have "assembled only half its forces" on the European frontlines by M+16, with "complete assembly" occurring only by M+26. Still, new regulations had been passed in 1912–13 regarding a Period Preparatory to War, under which Russia could secretly begin preparing for war with plausible deniability. If Russia could get a week's head start, then it could—for the first time—pull its weight in the Franco-Russian alliance, by mounting a simultaneous joint offensive against Germany by M+15.

It is true that French financial interests in Russia, the Ottoman Empire, and the Balkans should still have argued against going to war in July 1914. Aside from selling the weapons of Creusot to countries like Serbia, France had no more interest in the Balkans now than at any time in the past. In Paris a kind of Balkan fatigue had set in by 1914, coupled with growing doubt on the left about the entire Russian alliance. Moreover, in the May 1914 elections the parties of the left won a near landslide victory, which very nearly put a committed pacifist, Joseph Caillaux, in power, with a rabidly antiwar socialist, Jean Jaurès, as foreign minister. Both Caillaux and Jaurès had vociferously opposed the Three-Year Service Law; both wanted to repudiate the military alliance with Russia; both wanted rapprochement with Germany and an end to the arms race. Both also suspected France's nationalist president, Raymond Poincaré and his press backers of taking bribes from the Russians (Caillaux, for his part, had been accused of taking bribes from the Germans). Had Caillaux and Jaurès taken office in June 1914, their battle with Poincaré over the soul of French foreign policy would have lit up the political skies. Whether or not they succeeded in overturning the Three-Year Law and repudiating the Russian alliance, it is clear that they would have offered Russia no backing whatsoever in a new Balkan crisis.

Fortunately for Sazonov in his new, confrontational frame of mind, Caillaux and Jaurès did *not* take office in June 1914—for the excellent reason that Caillaux's wife was on trial for murder. Back in March she had walked into the office of Gaston Calmette, editor of the *Figaro*, a nationalist paper with close ties to Poincaré that had been publishing "slanders"

against her husband related both to his extramarital affairs and to rumors of treasonous contacts with the Germans.¹⁶ Mme Caillaux took out a small brown pistol and pumped six shots into Calmette at close-blank range. The upcoming trial had already turned into a white-hot political battleground, with charges of treason flying back and forth between supporters of Caillaux and Poincaré. The trial was scheduled to open in July 1914.

Not only France's domestic political future hung in the balance of the trial of Mme Caillaux. In an extraordinary coincidence of timing the trial was scheduled to open on July 20—the day Poincaré would arrive in St. Petersburg for a summit with Tsar Nicholas II to strengthen the Franco-Russian military alliance. Caillaux and Jaurès had wanted to cancel the trip. Jaurès had even introduced a motion in the French Chamber to deny the president travel funds. Instead, with Caillaux's political future on hold due to the trial, Poincaré had found a figurehead from Caillaux's party, milquetoast education minister René Viviani, to take office as premier and foreign minister, on the condition that he accept the Three-Year Law and not muck about with the Russian alliance. When Poincaré and Viviani set sail for Petersburg on July 15, 1914, the French news cycle was still dominated by the trial of Mme Caillaux—as it would be until she was acquitted on July 28, the day before they returned to France (also the day Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia). Had the trial and acquittal taken place a week or two earlier, Caillaux and Jaurès might have taken office-Viviani saw himself as a caretaker. Instead the trial provided Poincaré with a convenient smokescreen to rope France into supporting Sazonov's belligerent stance in the Balkans, just as the July crisis reached its terrible climax, rendering Caillaux's message of rapprochement absurd. As recently as May French backing for a Russian mobilization against Austria over Serbia had been unthinkable, but by the last week of July 1914 it was not only thinkable but done. In a final coup de grâce to the hopes of the French Left, Jaurès himself was assassinated by a French hyperpatriot, the wonderfully named Raoul Villain, on July 31.¹⁷

In an irresistible series of accidents, first Russia then Austria then Germany and France had seen key antiwar policymakers disappear from the scene one after another. Whether owing to Grigory Rasputin's machinations or his opposition's sticking in the craw of the Russian war party one too many times, Kokovstev had been ousted in February 1914. Franz Ferdinand, leading advocate of peace at all price in Vienna, was murdered. This murder also jolted Kaiser Wilhelm II toward belligerence, while muting the opposition of chancellor Bethmann Hollweg (who never had

the strength to go against his sovereign if the kaiser's mind was firm). Finally, a bizarre and unpredictable saga involving a high-society murder in Paris deprived France's leading pacifists, Caillaux and Jaurès, of influence just when it mattered most.

Still, despite the stars for belligerence between the two main European power blocs aligning as never before, it was by no means certain that war would break out as the July crisis hurtled toward its dramatic conclusion. Even Austria's clear intention to wage a punitive war against Serbia was nearly foiled by the opposition of the stubborn Hungarian minister-president. Tisza was a complex and towering figure in the politics of the Dual Monarchy. Archenemy of the slain heir to the throne owing to Hungary's persecution of its Romanian minority, he still shared the archduke's pacifist views. Paradoxically, both of these titans despised Serbia and Serbs yet for that very reason wanted to avoid a war, which would bring more Serbs into the empire. To overcome Tisza's stout opposition Berchtold had sent Hoyos to Berlin (without Tisza's knowledge); to placate the stubborn Magyar he had drawn up an ultimatum to Serbia, to prepare the ground diplomatically for war. Finally, Tisza's insistence on approving the text delayed its delivery until July 23 (immediately after Poincaré's departure from Petersburg), nearly a month after the Sarajevo murders, which ruined the Austro-German strategy of presenting the other powers with a fait accompli.

Despite the long delay occasioned by Tisza's stubborn opposition, which should have allowed Berchtold time to get his act together, the Austrians badly botched the delivery of the ultimatum. A well-worn myth, cultivated by the Entente powers for obvious reasons, claims that the harsh terms of Austria's ultimatum to Serbia must have been drawn up in collusion with the Germans. While it is true that Germany's ambassador in Vienna, Count Tschirschky, reported to Berlin on July 10 that Berchtold was preparing an ultimatum that he hoped Serbia would reject, Tschirschky was not shown the text until after it was sent under seal to Belgrade on July 20 (the day that Poincaré arrived in Petersburg and the Mme Caillaux trial opened in Paris). As an excuse Berchtold even told the German, erroneously, that the text was not finished. Germany's state secretary, Gottlieb von Jagow, requested to see the ultimatum, also in vain. More significantly, Jagow insisted that Berchtold wait until two conditions were met before sending off the ultimatum: (1) a thorough dossier must be prepared outlining Serbian complicity in the assassination; and (2) Italy's support for his Serbian policy must be gained, by whatever means necessary. Berchtold did nothing of the kind, sending off an ultimatum that not even the Germans had seen, let alone the Italians—and with no dossier.¹⁸

Serbia rejected the ultimatum at 6 PM on July 25, just as Berchtold and Conrad wanted. Both Serbia and Austria mobilized (the Serbs even before giving their reply, at 3 PM that day). But owing to the slowness of Austria's mobilization—and Serbia's incapacity to invade the Dual Monarchy—war between them was not imminent. As Conrad himself informed Berlin by way of both the German ambassador and military attaché, Austria's concentration against Serbia would not be ready for two weeks. When Kaiser Wilhelm II at last returned to Berlin from his holiday Baltic cruise on July 27, his chancellor (who had just returned from his country estate at Hohenfinow two days earlier) informed him that "Austria seems not to be able to begin war operations until August 12" and that Serbia "seems to intend to stand entirely on the defensive." 19 As Helmuth von Moltke, Conrad's counterpart as chief of staff of the German army, wrote his wife on that day, "the situation continues to be extremely obscure.... It will be about another fortnight before anything definite can be decided."²⁰ Thus Germany had no reason to panic or begin preparing for war.

The next day, July 28, 1914, Austria declared war on Serbia. While this fact appears in nearly all histories of the outbreak of World War I, it is not often appreciated just how bizarre Austria's action was. Having just assured Berlin that no war with Serbia would begin for two more weeks, Conrad neither wanted nor asked for a declaration of war. It was Berchtold, and Berchtold alone, who decided to do this (although he did get the emperor's approval). Even more absurdly, he sent the declaration of war by telegram (the first time in history that this was done). Serbia's prime minister, Nikola Pašić, indeed, thought it was a hoax, not least because the direct telegraphic line to Austria had been cut off and he was not sure how the telegram had reached Serbian territory. Pašić went so far as to wire to Petersburg, Paris, and London to inform them "of the strange telegram he had received and to ask whether it was true that Austria had declared war on Serbia." 21

This was a fait accompli *ad absurdum*: Austria offered the world a unilateral declaration of war but without the actual war. Berchtold's reason for committing this deeply foolish act had nothing to do with military necessity or any kind of inter-Allied obligation to Berlin—indeed it was a diplomatic and strategic disaster for the Germans. Rather, he was getting increasingly annoyed with all the "mediation" proposals arriving in Vienna and wanted, in essence, not to have to bother with them. The

Dual Monarchy (even Tisza, won over at last) had already resolved on war with Serbia. Even though Austria would not be ready to wage this war for two weeks, an exhausted Berchtold did not want to keep up the pretense of diplomacy any longer.

Austria's diplomatic self-immolation had dire consequences. Russia, knowing that Serbia would reject the ultimatum (as Sazonov had advised it to), had already inaugurated its Period Preparatory to War at midnight on July 25-26. This certainly pointed toward an imminent war against the Central Powers (the measures targeted both of them equally, despite Russia's later claim that it had undertaken a "partial mobilization" against Austria alone).²² Yet Russia's preliminary war preparations were secret: that was the whole point. Not until St. Petersburg had a casus belli could Sazonov own up to any mobilization measures, much less convince the tsar to move toward general mobilization. Berchtold's "strange telegram" gave Russia its casus belli, which otherwise it might have lacked until August 12. In response to Austria's declaration of war on Serbia, Russia announced partial mobilization—while also (again secretly) issuing the order for general mobilization, signed by the tsar, on July 29. While the tsar did change his mind minutes after signing the fateful order ("I Will Not Be Responsible for a Monstrous Slaughter"), Sazonov and the generals badgered him until he relented at 4 PM on July 30, 1914.²³ Russia inaugurated general mobilization (again secretly-although placards went up in Russia on July 31, none of the powers were formally notified). Even before this France, upon learning of the events of July 29, moved to invoke the casus foederis of its military alliance with Russia. On July 30 it ordered couverture (the "covering" of the German border by five army corps). As soon as Russian mobilization began (at midnight on July 30-31), the clock began ticking on the joint invasion of Germany planned for M + 15.24 In his act of diplomatic hara-kiri, in order not to have to take bothersome phone calls, Berchtold had brought the crushing weight of the Franco-Russian military alliance down upon Germany.

Now, it is true that European war might have broken out anyway in early August, even if Berchtold had not declared war on Serbia on July 28, 1914, against the advice of his own chief of staff. Russia's secret war preparations were in full swing by then; France would shortly have had to undertake measures of its own, to fulfill its alliance obligations to Russia; and Germany would then have had to counter these somehow. Still, Russia would have had no casus belli, and Sazonov would have been hard pressed to find one. Without sufficient justification for mobilizing, Russia could not have gotten France to invoke the *casus foederis* of its alliance.

More significantly, abundant evidence indicates that the Germans were moving to rein in their Austrian allies once they realized how badly Austria had botched the ultimatum business.

On July 28, 1914, the very day Berchtold sent his "strange telegram" to Belgrade, Kaiser Wilhelm II read Serbia's reply to the ultimatum and decided that it offered a basis for negotiation. While Belgrade's rejection of the clauses relating to the participation of Austrian officials in investigating the Sarajevo conspiracy inside Serbia had been unambiguous, in other areas the reply had seemed conciliatory—and had impressed other powers, especially Great Britain. As the kaiser told General Hans G. H. von Plessen, his adjutant, "England thinks the Serbian answer to the Austrian ultimatum such that in essence all the demands are conceded and therewith all reason for war is gone... Austria must at least lay hands on some gauge which should serve as a guarantee for the carrying out of [Serbia's] concessions." In order to save face for the Austrian army, the kaiser thought that Austria might stage a temporary occupation of Belgrade to "guarantee" Serbian compliance. Still, to ameliorate Russian resentment and ensure English and French support, he insisted that Austria would have to back down on some of its terms.

The kaiser's idea—known in diplomatic shorthand as the "halt in Belgrade"—might not have worked. Any suggestion of an occupation of the Serbian capital, however limited in duration, might still have given Sazonov enough ammunition to convince the tsar to mobilize Russia's armies against the Central Powers. And yet the truth is that we cannot know this for sure. The kaiser's idea was stillborn. Even before German diplomats passed it on to Vienna, Berchtold sent his telegram to Serbia, rendering all further diplomatic mediation moot. Diplomacy did not work, because Berchtold did not want it to—Germany and its diplomatic encirclement be damned. Far from obeying the dictates of an alliance, Berchtold was acting in opposition to the interests and desires of Austria's closest ally owing merely to his own stubborn will.

Something similar can be said of Russia's response to Berchtold's provocation. It is true that the war party in Petersburg was large and growing by July 1914, now that Kokovstev was out of the picture. Yet all still depended on Sazonov. Precisely because Russia's heretofore timid foreign minister was seen as less hot-headed than Krivoshein and the generals, Sazonov was the only man that the tsar trusted in July 1914. It was Sazonov who convinced the tsar to inaugurate the Period Preparatory to War on July 25. After the tsar changed his mind about general mobilization, his chief of staff, N. N. Yanushkevitch, and his war minister, V. A.

Sukhomlinov, begged him repeatedly over the phone to change his mind. The tsar not only refused to budge but refused to give them an audience at the Peterhof. Krivoshein tried calling but was told that the tsar would not speak to him, much less see him. Even M. V. Rodzianko, president of the Duma, was denied an audience. The only man that the tsar would agree to see on the fateful afternoon of July 30, 1914, was his foreign minister. A unanimous chorus of Russia's Duma leaders, other cabinet members, and the generals attempted to fortify the tsar's will—Yanushkevitch, in a spirited touch, told him that he would "smash his telephone" once he was given the go ahead so that the tsar could not change his mind again. But it was Sazonov, and Sazonov alone, who went to Peterhof Palace to make the case for war.²⁶

Although he was a simple man—indeed expressly because he was so guileless—Tsar Nicholas II understood exactly what his foreign minister was asking him to do, even if it was camouflaged in clever diplomatic language. "Germany had decided," Sazonov told him, "to bring about a collision, as otherwise she would not have rejected all the pacificatory proposals that had been made and could easily have brought her ally to reason." Now that Austria (that is, Berchtold) had provided Russia with a casus belli by declaring war on Serbia, "it only remained to do everything that was necessary to meet war fully armed and under the most favorable conditions for ourselves." The tsar, we are told, listened in silence to these arguments. "Think of the responsibility you are advising me to assume!" he objected at last. "Remember it is a question of sending thousands of men to their deaths." Another long and uncomfortable silence followed. Finally the tsar relented. Sazonov rushed down to the palace telephone, called Yanushkevitch, and uttered the magic words: "now you can smash your telephone."27

In this way the "doomsday machine" of European war was set in motion. Mobilization timetables now took on ominous significance. France and Russia concentrated their armies for a joint invasion of Germany on M+15, which forced Germany to countermobilize, lest Moltke's timetable be thrown off. The German war plan required the violation of Belgium for an assault on Liège on M+3, which provided Britain a casus belli for intervention and turned European war into world war. In this sense alone can the existence of two principal military alliance blocs with jointly developed war plans be said to have determined the course of events.²⁸

The decision to set the machine in motion, however, was a matter not of alliance obligations but of individual will—principally the wills of Berchtold and Sazonov. In a sense the entire July crisis may be understood as a battle of wills between these two men. Berchtold sought to overcome his reputation for weakness acquired during the Balkan Wars by settling accounts with Serbia, even while Sazonov sought to overcome a reputation for weakness acquired during the Balkan Wars by refusing to buckle under. With Kokovstev gone in Petersburg, Caillaux and Jaurès neutralized in Paris owing to the Mme Caillaux trial, and the Sarajevo outrage removing the most powerful voices of caution from Vienna and Berlin (the archduke's and the kaiser's), Europe's fate was left in the hands of two unstable men who felt that they had something to prove and would receive no warning from their allies (the kaiser's warning to Vienna came too late to make a difference). Gavrilo Princip had committed the perfect crime, but it was Berchtold and Sazonov who turned it into a global catastrophe.

NOTES

- 1. Henry Kissinger, Diplomacy, chapter 8.
- 2. Cited in Ralph R. Menning, "Dress Rehearsal for 1914?" 12.
- 3. Sean McMeekin, History's Greatest Heist, 29.
- 4. Cited in L. C. F. Turner, Origins of the First World War, 18–19.
- 5. Cited in Sean McMeekin, The Berlin-Baghdad Express, 102.
- 6. Hew Strachan, The First World War, 69.
- 7. Cited in Luigi Albertini, Origins of the War of 1914, 401.
- 8. As paraphrased by Samuel R. Williamson Jr. in *Austria-Hungary and the Origins of the First World War*, 133.
- 9. Cited in Sidney Bradshaw Fay, Origins of the World War, 207–8.
- Tschirschky to Bethmann Hollweg, with kaiser's marginal notes, June 30, 1914,
 no. 7 in *Die deutschen Dokumente zum Kriegsausbruch*, ed. Karl Kautsky, Max Montgelas, and Walter Schücking.
- 11. A popular theory has it that Kokovstev was sacked because he had a falling out with Rasputin, who convinced the tsar (via the tsarina) that he must go. The evidence, however, is thin.
- 12. Giesl from Belgrade, July 13, 1914, in the Haus-, Hof-, und Staatsarchiv in Vienna, P.A.I. Liasse Krieg, Karton 810.
- 13. Paléologue to Viviani, July 6, 1914, no. 477 in *Documents diplomatiques français*, vol. 10, series 3.
- 14. Sazonov to Grigorevich, June 30, 1914, no. 24 in *Internationale Beziehungen im Zeitalter des Imperialismus*, ed. M. N. Pokrovsky (Berlin: R. Hobbing, 1931–), vol. 4.
- 15. Bruce Menning, Bayonets before Bullets, 252.
- 16. What Mme Caillaux really objected to was that the paper was publishing love letters that she had written to Caillaux while he was still married to his previous wife.

- 17. Villain aimed to murder Caillaux too. He shot Jaurès with a pistol inscribed "J"; he was arrested with a second pistol in hand inscribed "C."
- 18. Bechtold to Macchio, July 21, 1914, cited in Fay, *Origins of the World War*, 253; and Jagow to Tschirschky, July 11, 1914, and Jagow to Tschirschky, July 15, 1914, nos. 31 and 46 in *Die Deutschen Dokumente zur Kriegsausbruch*.
- 19. Bethmann Hollweg to Kaiser Wilhelm II, July 27, 1914 (11:20 AM), no. 245 in *Die Deutschen Dokumente zur Kriegsausbruch*.
- 20. Cited in Turner, *Origins of the First World War*, 102.
- 21. Cited in Albertini, Origins of the War of 1914, 461.
- 22. On the issue of Russia's early mobilization, see Sean McMeekin, *The Russian Origins of the First World War*, especially chapter 2.
- 23. The tsar's "monstrous slaughter" remark upon changing his mind is cited in Albertini, *Origins of the War of 1914*, 558–59.
- 24. On couverture and its importance, see Stefan Schmidt, Frankreichs Aussenpolitik in der Julikrise 1914, 344–45. On M + 15, see Terence Zuber, The Real German War Plan, 1904–1914, 159.
- 25. Plessen diary, cited in Albertini, Origins of the War of 1914, 467.
- 26. Sazonov, at the tsar's insistence, did have to share his audience with a General Tatischev, who, incongruously, was about to be posted to Potsdam as the tsar's liaison to Kaiser Wilhelm II, a move inspired by the "Willy-Nicky" peace telegrams.
- 27. Diary entry for July 17/30, 1914, in M. F. Schilling, *How the War Began*, 64–66; and Maurice Paléologue, *An Ambassador's Memoirs*, 45 (quotations).
- 28. Even here complicating factors remain. Despite its moves against Serbia having catalyzed the crisis in the first place, Austria had no desire to fight Russia, as evidenced by the fact that Austria did not declare war on Petersburg until August 6—and even then Moltke had to beg Conrad for another ten days before he would finally abandon his cherished Serbian offensive to reinforce Galicia against the Russians. The Austrians were just as shocked to learn that Germany planned to invade Belgium and leave East Prussia nearly undefended against Russia, as the Germans had been when Austria declared war on Serbia two weeks before it was ready to invade.

The Dilemmas of Young Turk Policy, 1914–1918

Feroz Ahmad

Young Turk policy during the Great War was neither adventurous nor naïve, as it is often portrayed. It was pragmatic, and its principal goal was to save the Ottoman Empire. The policy was based on the Ottoman experience of the Eastern Question in the late nineteenth century and more specifically on the experience with the Great Powers since the revolution of 1908.

After they restored the constitution in July 1908, the Young Turks expected a sympathetic response from the Great Powers—especially from Britain and France. Instead they found themselves facing one crisis after another, culminating in their virtual expulsion from Europe as a result of the Balkan Wars of 1912–13. That left them demoralized, though the faction led by the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) that seized power in January 1913 was determined to make the best of a bad situation. This faction (hereafter the Unionists) ruled the Ottoman Empire until the armistice of 1918, when they dissolved the CUP and the main leaders fled abroad. This chapter examines their policy and the decisions that they were forced to make.

When the Balkan Wars ended in 1913, the Unionists realized that their isolation had been disastrous and that this isolation had to be ended if the empire was to survive. They were convinced that the Great Powers—England, France, Russia, Germany, Italy, and Austria—would partition what remained of their empire without an alliance. Even though they had invited the German military mission under Liman von Sanders in 1913, they knew that their future would be more secure with the Triple Entente of England, France, and Russia. They were not pro-German as is often alleged: hence their attempts to conclude alliances with Britain,

France, and even Russia before 1914. Only after their overtures had been rejected by the Entente powers did they turn to Germany, and Berlin considered their offer seriously only *after* war in Europe had broken out. The secret German-Turkish alliance was signed on August 2, 1914.²

For the Ottomans the war can be divided into three phases. The first one began when they signed the secret alliance with Germany on August 2, 1914, and lasted until they entered the war in November. The second phase included the Gallipoli campaign, which lasted throughout 1915 and Russian incursions into eastern Anatolia and until the Ottomans were rescued by the outbreak of revolution in Russia in March 1917. In the final phase the Unionists enjoyed a period of hope when it seemed as though Germany would win a conclusive victory in the West and allow the Unionists to sit at the table when peace was negotiated. But the failure of the final offensive in August 1918 led to the defeat of Germany and to the end of the Ottoman Empire.

After the secret treaty was signed and war raged in Europe, the Unionists interpreted their alliance to mean that it did not commit them to enter. They saw it as an insurance policy guaranteeing that their neutrality would not be violated either by Britain's navy or by Russia. But the Unionists were divided. The war party, led by war minister Enver Paşa, shared with Berlin the short war illusion and believed that the war would be over within months. Thus if Istanbul became a belligerent the Sublime Porte would have a place at the negotiating table. The neutralist camp advised staying out of the war, however, arguing that the Entente—England, France, and Russia—would never attack a well-defended Turkey and would seek its benevolent neutrality under all circumstances. The Porte could exploit this advantage for as long as possible and enter the war, if necessary, at a time of its choosing.

The Unionists had virtually placed the Ottoman Empire in Berlin's hands—the German military mission trained the army and two German ships, the *Goeben* and *Breslau*, had arrived in Ottoman water, along with the Ottoman navy.³ Nevertheless, throughout August and September the neutralist argument prevailed: Istanbul remained neutral. Even Enver Paşa agreed that the Ottoman state should not act before Greece, Bulgaria, and Romania had made their attitude clear. The Unionists sent missions to the Balkans to discuss the position of these states, but to no avail. These powers showed no inclination to enter the war.⁴ So it seemed that the Porte could maintain its armed neutrality. It was not the machinations of Enver and the war party that forced the Ottoman state to enter the war but Istanbul's chronic financial crisis and the inability to

pay salaries. The Entente was not forthcoming with money, and Berlin insisted that it would provide gold only after the Ottoman state entered the war.

The Unionists had seen the war in Europe as an opportunity to exercise full sovereignty, which the Great Powers had denied them. They mobilized the army on August 2, sensing that this was one of those rare historic moments when they had the freedom to act and become masters of their own destiny. The press reflected the mood of bitterness against Europe for the humiliation that it had heaped upon the Turks. This was often expressed in terms of open admiration for the way in which neutral Japan was exploiting the war in Europe to consolidate its own position in East Asia, even against Turkey's ally, Germany. Editorials like *Tercüman-i Hakikat*'s "The Orient for the Orientals" (August 20, 1914) show the rising feeling of solidarity with Asia and a determination to break bonds of European control.

In this spirit the Porte abolished the Capitulations, (Turkey's "unequal treaties") on September 9. The decision was extremely popular with the urban masses, who celebrated the occasion as though the country had been liberated from foreign control.⁵

Meanwhile the financial situation continued to decline. On September 27 the inner cabinet decided to ask Berlin for a loan of 5 million liras in gold. But as the finance minister, Mehmed Cavid, had anticipated, Germany refused to give any money until Turkey agreed to enter the war. Wishing to strengthen the war party, however, Berlin sent 2 million liras, which arrived in two installments on October 16 and 21. The Entente embassies realized that Turkey could enter the war at any moment. It was now only a question of how this entry would be orchestrated: the story of Admiral Wilhelm Souchon sailing into the Black Sea and attacking Russian ports is too well known to need repeating.

Enver Paşa and the war party, in collusion with Germany, have long been held responsible for Turkey's entry into World War I. But it is important to distinguish between the principle of intervention—upon which almost all Unionists were agreed—and the question of timing, which was the cause of controversy. On the first issue virtually every Unionists agreed that Turkey would have to fight in order to defend its interests and even to guarantee its very survival. Hence the frantic search for an ally. They felt great relief when Germany signed the treaty, even at such a late date when Europe was at war.

Opposition to the treaty from some Unionists such as Cavid Bey resulted from what they saw as unfavorable terms, not because the treaty had been signed with Germany. Once the treaty had been signed it was

a question of choosing a course of action best designed to serve Turkey's interests. That is where differences arose. The civilians wanted to delay intervention for as long as possible and to enter the war when it was in Turkey's best interest to do so. Meanwhile they had the treaty revised to make it more equitable and abrogated the Capitulations unilaterally without undue fuss from the powers. But they failed to make any further gains. By October 1914 the Porte had lost the initiative, and its policy became reactive.

The Entente's failure to make any concessions that furthered Turkish sovereignty also placed the neutralists at a disadvantage. The Entente expected the Turks to wait patiently until the end of the war before any adjustments were made. That implied the old policy of dictation and subservience rather than negotiations between equals. It was therefore repugnant to the Unionists, who were striving for a status of equality with Europe. The Entente was mistaken in believing that the Unionists could be mollified with minor modifications in the status quo. This calculation may have been valid for the old ruling class ousted by the 1908 revolution and the Liberals. But it did not hold true for the Unionists. Their ambition was to create another socioeconomic base internally and establish a relationship of equality with Europe in order to justify their very existence and to guarantee their future. The alteration of the status quo called for a dynamic policy even though that involved certain risks. The neutralists were willing to take the necessary risks but were more cautious than the interventionists.

In terms of their aspirations there was again no significant difference between the neutralists and the war party, just as there were no differences between the so-called pro-French, pro-English, and pro-German Unionist factions, who all saw themselves as "pro-Ottoman."

But the war party was strong in the army. Having been trained by German military missions the soldiers believed in Germany's military supremacy and were convinced of a quick German victory. Early German successes seemed to confirm these attitudes and the belief that the war would be a short one. If it did not end by Christmas, as many predicted, it would be concluded by the summer of 1915. German officers serving in the military mission were so convinced of a short war that many wanted to return to their units in Europe before war ended. They carried out their propaganda among Turkish officers, marking the Ottoman Empire's new frontiers on maps after the partition of Russia.

First Istanbul had to fight. To the war party the prospect of victory seemed all the more enticing as the war was expected to be a short one and made it vital for the Porte to act before it was too late. The Germans were also not averse to using the threat that Berlin might reach an understanding with the Entente at the expense of the empire if the Unionists did not fight, a not unlikely solution in the age of imperialism. In October 1914 German officers were warning their allies that if they did not intervene Russia might defeat Austria and the way would be open to Istanbul. Or the military mission might be recalled, and they would be left defenseless to face an angry Entente.

The Porte's entry into war was designed to serve German strategic interests and no doubt did so in that the Ottoman armies drew Entente troops away from the western and eastern fronts. The proclamation of the jihad or Holy War in November 1914 was also part of the German scheme to revolutionize the Islamic world ruled by Britain, France, and Russia against its colonial masters. ¹⁰

Initially the Ottomans had no war aims of their own except to guarantee the survival of the empire. Only on December 25, 1916, did foreign minister Halil Bey (Menteşe) inform Count Johann von Pallavicini, Vienna's ambassador at the Porte, that Istanbul would require the evacuation not only of all Ottoman territory occupied by the enemy—parts of eastern Anatolia and Iraq—but also of Egypt and Cyprus and the rectification of its frontier with Bulgaria. 11

The rupture of relations with the Entente in November 1914 sparked off a general crisis that lasted until March 1917. It eased temporarily in December 1915 when the Allied armies began to withdraw from the Gallipoli peninsula. This crisis was marked by the fear of defeat that would have led to the end of the Ottoman Empire and the destruction of the constitutional order that the Unionists had created in 1908. The Unionists saw the war as an existential struggle.

The first task of the Unionists was to provide a united political front for both internal and external consumption. They succeeded in doing so by dissuading grand vezir Said Halim Paşa from resigning over the Black Sea incident of October 29 that led to Russia's declaration of war. ¹² But the committee failed to prevent the resignation of other ministers who protested not against Istanbul's entry but because the cabinet had not been consulted before such a momentous decision. ¹³

The resignations had no discernible impact on public opinion, which did not yet exist. Ahmed Emin (Yalman), a witness to these events, wrote that there was no popular opposition to the war. The people, he observed, "were unorganized and had no means of voicing grievances. Turkey was worse off in this respect than the other belligerents. She had no organized labor movement, no political opposition, no organization representing

high intellectual interests and ideas of peace." ¹⁴ But if Istanbul showed no opposition to war, it also gave no evidence of spontaneous chauvinism of the type witnessed in European capitals at the outbreak of war. Nationalism and chauvinism had to be manufactured, as the CUP soon came to realize.

Istanbul's entry into the war, untimely from its point of view, was dictated by the strategic needs of Germany and Austria. The empire was only a cog, though it turned out to be an important one, in the vast war machine operated from Berlin. The Unionists understood this and accepted their role without much protest. That explains the timing of the Ottoman entry: the Germans, having launched an offensive in Poland in order to relieve Russian pressure on Austria, wanted the Porte to launch an attack in the Caucasus in order to tie down Russian troops. For their part, the Unionists knew that the war would be decided on the western front and did not want to be left out when peace was negotiated. Thus Hafiz Hakki Paşa, a prominent and high-ranking Unionist officer, told his men on the Caucasus front that they had to launch an offensive soon if they were to sit at the peace table in the spring of 1915. 15

With the hope of an early peace the Unionists put the best possible face on the role that they were playing. They talked of regaining Egypt, a province over which no Ottoman government had ever renounced its sovereignty and rights, which had been regularly specified and enumerated in the *firmans* of investiture of the khedives of Egypt. The grand vezirate of Said Halim, a member of the Egyptian ruling family, strengthened the claim. The appointment of his cousin Abbas Hilmi Paşa as minister of public works also helped to reinforce the connection with Egypt as well as the Arab provinces in general.¹⁶

The ideology being promoted by the CUP was principally Islamism/ Ottomanism and not Turkish nationalism (Türkçülük) as is sometimes claimed. There was a growing awareness of nationalism among some Unionists, manifested in the Türk Yurdu group around people like Yusuf Akçura. But this group, though articulate in putting forward its ideas, did not dominate the ideology of the regime let alone make policy. The reason for this was partly pragmatic and had to do with the consciousness of both the ruling elite as well as the mass of the people who were being mobilized for the war effort. Muslims constituted the majority in the empire and were therefore more likely to be swayed by an appeal to Islam than to national solidarity. The charisma of the Ottoman dynasty that united the sultanate and caliphate facilitated this appeal to religion. Moreover, the appeal to Islamic solidarity was expected to be effective not only in

the Arab provinces and North Africa but also in Iran, Afghanistan, and India, regions where the Unionists hoped to foment rebellions against their enemies. This was also part of German strategy.

Berlin brought a group of Indian nationalist revolutionaries to Istanbul for this very purpose. When they arrived in September 1914, their leader, Har Dayal, tried to persuade Enver Paşa to abandon Islamism and adopt nationalism as the ideology of struggle against the Entente. The Unionists found his idea dangerous, for it would encourage national movements within the Ottoman Empire as well. Therefore Enver and the Germans dismissed the idea of nationalism. Islamic unity (İttihad-1 İslam) remained the dominant mode of propaganda until at least the Arab rebellion of June 1916. Perhaps the resignation of Said Halim as grand vezir in January 1917 symbolized the final shift from Islam to patriotism/nationalism and an ideology based on Anatolia.¹⁷

By January 1915 the situation had become sufficiently dangerous for the Unionists to consider making a separate peace. They approached the British but were rebuffed. The first major bombardment at Gallipoli began on February 19, 1915. Such was the fear that the Entente would break through that the Unionists began to prepare to retreat into Anatolia and Thrace to continue the struggle. As though to legitimize the impending move to Anatolia and the adoption of an "eastern policy," *Tanin* (February 27 and 28, 1915) proposed the formation of an Eastern Triple Alliance of the Ottoman Empire, Persia, and Afghanistan, anticipating the Sa'adabad Pact of July 8, 1937.

By March the situation had become even more desperate. But it was eased a little by the sinking of the French battleship *Bouvet* at the mouth of the Straits on March 18. The Anglo-French bombardment of the Straits was essentially a political act designed to bring Greece and Bulgaria into the war on the side of the Entente. Winston Churchill even hoped for "an uprising of the Greek and Armenian minorities and a Moslem movement against the Turks." The British were relying on Liberal Young Turks to overthrow the CUP government in Istanbul. British documents reveal that seasoned Unionist opponents such as Prince Sabahaddin, Colonel Sadik, and Henry Gerald Fitzmaurice, the former dragoman at the British embassy and inveterate enemy of the Unionists, were in Athens and Bucharest plotting with Istanbul's enemies. In May 1915 *Tanin* even published a series of articles on the Liberal conspiracy, suggesting that Unionist intelligence was quite aware of Entente intrigues.¹⁹

Thus, apart from fighting on a number of fronts, the Unionists were faced with the possibility of a coup d'état. That would be more likely if

Ottoman armies suffered defeat. Turkish exiles predicted a military revolt if the Entente broke through the Straits. The British were equally confident of such an outcome, and "intelligence reports were adduced in support of the hope of 'a revolution taking place in Constantinople' if once the British Fleet appeared in the Sea of Marmora."²⁰

News from the Caucasus front continued to be discouraging: in April Russian forces advanced into eastern Anatolia, captured Tutuk, Malazgirt, and Van, and began preparations for a big winter offensive. The British continued to advance in Iraq, capturing Kut on June 3. The Turks, however, failed to make any impression on the Egyptian front. To make matters worse, Italy seemed about to join the Entente.²¹

The deportation and massacre of Greek and Armenian communities in Anatolia began precisely at this point. The Porte was convinced that the Greek and Armenian nationalists had thrown in their lot with the enemy. Contemporary Turkish sources have little to say on this issue, only hints in articles that connect Armenian organizations with British-Liberal conspiracies to overthrow the regime. The *Moniteur Oriental* of June 17, 1915, even gave a list of Armenians executed for treason in Istanbul, noting that Stepan Sabahgulian, one of the conspirators, had been sentenced to death in absentia.

The military situation remained desperate throughout the second half of 1915, along with the threat of an Anglo-French breakthrough at Gallipoli and the occupation of Istanbul. That was aggravated by the fear of a Bulgarian attack. "Had the Bulgarians attacked us from the rear while we were fighting...at Gallipoli, our situation would have been disastrous," wrote Halil Menteşe.²²

Four months later the situation had become so desperate that the Unionists surrendered territory to Sofia to win Bulgaria over to the Triple Alliance. Enver Paşa told American ambassador Henry Morgenthau: "By surrendering [territory] immediately...we showed our good faith. It was very hard for us to do it, of course, especially to give up a part of... [Edirne], but it is worth the price. We really surrendered this territory in exchange for [Istanbul], for if Bulgaria had not come in on our side, we would have lost this city." This was described as a turning point in the war, an event that would alter the balance of power in the Balkans. The Serbo-Bulgarian war ended in Serbia's defeat, enabling Berlin to establish a direct link with Istanbul for the first time.

The real reward for Istanbul's sacrifice came three months later, in late December and early January 1916, when the Entente evacuated the Gallipoli peninsula. As soon as the news of the evacuation was announced, public celebrations in the capital were again organized by the CUP. But the lasting significance of this event, which the press described as "The Great Victory," was the tremendous boost that it gave to Ottoman morale. At one stroke the trauma of the Balkan Wars had been purged and with it the sense of inferiority. The Turks were convinced that they had won a decisive victory, having defeated a fleet that had threatened their capital for a century. They were sure that they had done more than their share for the Triple Alliance and expected their partners in Berlin and Vienna to recognize and reward their contribution.²⁴

The victory in the Dardanelles did not end the crisis, which now assumed a different form. In January 1916 the Russian army of the Caucasus launched a new offensive and captured Erzurum on February 16, opening the road to Anatolia. Trabzon fell in April, and Erzincan in July. Prior to the fall of Erzurum German general Erich von Falkenhayn had noted the precarious situation of Istanbul, observing that it "would not be able to hold out much longer and already showed signs of wanting to make peace." But that was ironic: because of the loss of Erzurum (and later Trabzon and Erzincan), "the chances of peace for them [the Turks] had become more remote." ²⁵

The Ottoman capture of the Iraqi town of Kut-ul-Amara on April 29, 1916, and the surrender of General Sir Charles Townshend and his army, was the only bright spot for the Turks in 1916. But rejoicing soon gave way to despair and anger when the Unionists learned of the Hashemite revolt in the Hijaz in late June 1916. It was not communicated to the public immediately, though perceptive readers of the press must have guessed that something was dreadfully wrong when they read the sultan's proclamation in their papers on July 2 appointing the senator Sharif Ali Haydar Paşa amir of Mecca in place of Sharif Husayn. When the news became public, the Istanbul press could do little more than belittle the revolt as the result of Husayn's perfidy and English gold.²⁶

Peace could not be made until the territory that the Turks had lost in Anatolia and in the Arab provinces had been recovered by a German victory in Europe. This issue was taken up with the Germans. On September 28, 1916, a clause was added to the German-Turkish Treaty stipulating that neither party would sign a peace treaty so long as the territory of one was occupied by the enemy. And neither side would conclude a separate peace.²⁷ The Germans did not take their promises to the Turks seriously, which became apparent during the negotiations with the Bolsheviks at Brest-Litovsk in 1918. But the Turks were now totally dependent on Berlin. This was symbolized by the decision to send Ottoman troops to the

European theater even though Anatolian and Arab provinces were under enemy occupation. The Porte recognized that an Allied victory could only be won in Europe.

During the remaining months of 1916 and into 1917 the crisis of the Ottoman Empire continued to deepen. Istanbul found it more and more difficult to continue the war, and the Unionists hoped that neutral Washington would mediate a peace based on compromise. But these hopes were dashed when the Entente politely rejected President Woodrow Wilson's December 18 proposals, on January 10, 1917, and stated their own war aims. It demanded the expulsion of the Turks from Europe. The Unionists interpreted this rejection to mean that England and France intended to satisfy their war aims at the expense of the Ottoman Empire and not through a peace based on compromise.²⁸

Meanwhile, as Ottoman resistance weakened, Russian and British armies continued to advance into Anatolia and the Arab provinces, respectively. The Ottomans had lost almost a third of a million soldiers and were quite disorganized. Russian forces were poised to drive into the heartland of Anatolia but were restrained by communications problems, war weariness, and the onset of revolutionary discontent. Had the offensive been resumed and the tsarist regime not fallen in March 1917, the Turkish armies in the east probably would have collapsed completely. The end of the tsarist autocracy in March 1917 (Tsar Nicholas II abdicated on March 11) gave a new lease of life to the Unionist regime, itself on the verge of collapse.

Mehmed Talat Paşa, who replaced Said Halim as grand vezir at the beginning of February 1917, could do little to resolve the internal contradictions of an exhausted state and society. But the outbreak of revolution in Russia revived hopes of an early peace in Istanbul. Berlin was so alarmed by the Unionists' hunger for peace that Enver Paşa went to Germany on March 16 to reassure Gen. Erich Ludendorff and the Supreme Command that his government would continue to stand firm with its allies.²⁹

The cabinet discussed prospects for peace on April 4. Finance minister Mehmed Cavid noted in his diary: "There are no longer any war heroes or talk about conquering Egypt or the Caucasus." The cabinet decided to ask Berlin to give up Russian territories that it was occupying and agreed to consider making concessions on the Straits. The next day Talat made a statement calling for a new relationship with liberal Russia. 30

Not only was there no peace with Russia, however, but America's declaration of war on Germany on April 6 and Istanbul's rupture of relations

with Washington—under German pressure—on April 20 proved to be two psychological blows that increased demoralization among the Unionists.

On April 21 Talat Paşa left for Berlin, returning to Istanbul on May 8. He had gone to inform his ally of the desperate situation in his country and the impossibility of carrying on without immediate help. Berlin begged him to hold on until July, when German submarines were expected to bring Britain to its knees. Then they would conclude an honorable peace. Within the CUP the position of the war party led by Enver declined as a result of the military setbacks; power began to shift back to the civilian wing of the committee.³¹

The only bright spot on the horizon was Russia's deteriorating situation, which enabled the Ottomans to recapture territories under Russian occupation since 1915. Morale, at a low ebb since early 1917, was restored. The press no longer spoke of peace at any price. "We did not enter the war merely to defend Istanbul but in order to assure ourselves a present and a future," wrote the Unionist Tanin on April 20, 1917. Hope of an advantageous peace increased after the Reichstag Peace resolution of July 19. The resolution called for a negotiated peace, with the renunciation of all enforced frontier adjustments and political and economic "rapes," and an express acknowledgment of the freedom of the seas. If these conditions were not met, the Reichstag also expressed its determination to fight on. The Istanbul press naturally supported the resolution, optimistic about peace because of the deteriorating situation in Russia. In his note of August 1 Pope Benedict XV addressed all the belligerents, reflecting the growing desire for peace. He invoked Christian principles, opposed the war, and "appealed for an end to the suicidal hostilities." 32

The peace moves from the Allies received no practical encouragement from the Entente or from President Wilson, who insisted that they would not negotiate peace with military autocracies. Moreover, Wilson vainly encouraged the enemy's people to throw off their governments.³³

Unionist morale received a further boost when Ottoman troops were sent to Galacia to support Austria. Their claim to equality with Germany and Austria at the peace table had been strengthened—or so they thought.³⁴

But there was no change in the deplorable state of the country's military or economic situation. Food and fuel were virtually impossible to obtain. The people in the capital suffered great hardship but were not organized to resist. The treasury was empty, and in October 1917 the government printed 50 million liras against Germany's deposit of the same amount against the Ottoman Public Debt.³⁵

By the end of 1917, with what seemed like the collapse of Russia after the Bolshevik revolution and the impending defeat of the Entente, Unionist war aims became expansionist. This expansionism had two faces: pan-Islamist and pan-Turanist/pan-Turkist. The pan-Islamists demanded the restoration of Egypt and the Arab provinces. The pan-Turanists looked to the Caucasus and talked of the union of Turkic/Muslim peoples of Russia, Persia, and even Afghanistan.

The Unionists began to see themselves as potentially a great regional power. To enhance the empire's geopolitical role they required a large and powerful fleet. They believed that after all their sacrifices they ought to be given the lion's share of Russia's Black Sea fleet. But this self-image clashed with Germany's ambitions and with the role it had assigned to postwar Istanbul in its scheme for world domination.

When war aims were discussed in the Ottoman assembly on December 3, 1917, it was easy for the foreign minister, Ahmed Nesimi, to justify his government's record by pointing to the secret treaties that Russia had signed with its allies, published by the Bolsheviks. Turkey had only defended itself against imperialism bent on partitioning the Ottoman Empire.³⁶

But the Bolshevik revolution also had the effect of dividing opinion in the assembly and broadening discussion regarding peace. A socialist group had emerged calling for an immediate peace, almost on the Bolshevik model. It was in a minority, however, and the majority favored regaining lost territories by acquiring new lands. A deputy speaking for this group noted: "We want peace on condition that the Ottoman Empire retain its political unity. Baghdad must have the same importance for the Allies as Alsace-Lorraine or Berlin. Just as Alsace-Lorraine is a vital condition for peace so must the Hijaz assume the same character; for us its value is greater." ³⁷

Pan-Turanist sentiment was equally strong in the army and among some members of the central committee of the CUP. In fact it gained strength as the British advanced in Syria, capturing Jerusalem on December 9, 1917. Yet this group became politically weaker in the party as Enver Paşa's position declined, as he was challenged by rivals like Fethi Bey (Okyar). By the end of 1917 rumors spread that Fethi supported by Mustafa Kemal planned to remove Enver Paşa from his influential role.³⁸

It is worth noting that the Ottoman delegation to Brest-Litovsk had no one to fight for pan-Turanist claims. Grand vezir Talat Paşa was a pragmatist who represented the consensus. Foreign minister Ahmed Nesimi belonged to Talat's group. Reşad Hikmet was a foreign ministry technician. Ibrahim Hakkı Paşa, a former grand vezir, was an old

Ottoman bureaucrat, while Generals Ahmed İzzet Paşa and Zeki Paşa represented the old reformist generals in the Ottoman army.

Moreover, pan-Turanist ideals clashed with German ambition, and Berlin always got its way. At Brest-Litovsk the Ottomans were forced to make all the concessions even when this involved their own territory. For example, Talat wanted Russia to withdraw from territories that it was occupying in Anatolia. The Germans asked Talat not to press this claim, as the Russians would ask the Germans to withdraw from Russian territory. Talat was forced to comply with the German request; it was a matter of power. Count Johann von Bernstorff, who served as ambassador in Istanbul (1917–18) noted in his memoirs: "Our sudden change of front on the Caucasian question has involved us in much trouble here, especially as we already had the Bulgarian question heavily on our hands. Being allied to the Turks, it is not easy for us to tell them that we consider them politically inferior and unworthy of any acquisition of territory."

Yet at Brest-Litovsk the Turks regained Kars, Ardahan, and Batum (Batumi), territories lost to tsarist Russia in 1878. Some pan-Turanist deputies led by Ahmet Ağaoğlu wanted the government to establish control over various Muslim/Turkic states that had recently gained their independence from Russia. In the assembly he complained that the government had done little to help these "fraternal states." The response of Enver Paşa, who is often described as a pan-Turkist, is notable for its moderation: "Ahmed Bey claims that the government has not done its duty. But as the Bolsheviks adhere to the principle of self-determination, it follows that we must recognize the independence of these new states in the Caucasus when they approach us. We shall not fail to recognize or aid neighboring governments that want to be on friendly terms with us, or those which are of the same race and religion as we are."

In the spring of 1918 the Unionists' gamble to enter the war seemed to have paid off. Not only had they regained important territory lost in 1878, but the new states in the Caucasus were considered to be in Istanbul's sphere of influence, serving as a rampart between us and the Russian provinces to the north. Delegations from the newly independent states were coming to Istanbul to seek advice and support. But the role of guide and protector was an illusion that the Unionists could not sustain because of their own dependence on Germany.

The Unionists had recognized their predicament and knew that they would have to continue to depend on Germany after the war, given their country's weakness. This was the only hope for the future: postwar Turkey would provide raw materials for Germany's industry and a market for German goods, while Germany would provide the technical know-how and the capital for Turkey's development. The Unionists saw this as a relationship of mutual dependence, with Germany as the senior partner.

The Unionists' outlook for the Caucasus was based on a similar notion of a bilateral partnership. Russia (they believed) was a giant that had to be contained. Neither Germany nor Turkey was strong enough to do so alone. Therefore they had to agree on spheres of influence in order to accomplish this task. The Unionists saw their responsibility in the Black Sea and the Turkic/Muslim regions, where they shared an ethnic-religious affinity with the people.

The Germans, however, wanted a total monopoly in the region and, like all Great Powers or later super powers, saw Turkey as a client. They refused to give the Unionists anything resembling the status of partner, however junior. In the end pan-Turanist or pan-Islamic expansionism was a fantasy. Even if the Central Powers had won the war, Germany was determined to convert the postwar Ottoman state into a semicolony, in Ambassador Bernstorff's image: Cromer's "example was constantly before my mind, and my idea was to transform Turkey into a German Egypt." ⁴¹

The Unionists' disillusion and war weariness of early 1917 returned with the failure of Germany's final offensive on August 8, 1918. The problem of feeding the capital was more acute than ever. Aerial bombing that began in July increased the demoralization and the yearning for peace. The civilian element in the CUP was gaining strength by the day. Political censorship was abolished on June 11, followed by military and postal censorship.

The death of Sultan Mehmed Reşad on July 3, 1918, brought the anti-Unionist Vahdettin to the throne. He immediately asserted his constitutional authority by declaring that he was the supreme commander and appointed his men—Ahmed İzzet Paşa, Cemal Zeki Paşa, and Vehip Paşa—as his personal aides-de-camp.

In early September Cavid was again in Berlin seeking yet another loan plus an emergency 70,000 liras to feed the people of Istanbul. Talat was also there, discussing the relationship with Berlin. On his way back to Istanbul he had decided to stop off in Sofia to have an audience with Bulgaria's Tsar Ferdinand. But his audience was canceled, and he was told that Bulgaria was suing for peace.

As soon as Talat returned to Istanbul, he called a cabinet meeting (the first of many) to discuss the question of peace. He submitted his

resignation on October 8, having asked President Wilson to mediate but receiving no reply. He was succeeded by Ahmed İzzet Paşa on October 13.

The new session of the assembly opened on October 10 and began to discuss peace. But neither England nor France was interested in a separate peace with Istanbul; they never had been. On October 16 Nuri Bey, a staff officer, read a report on the state of the army, shattering all illusions about the possibility of a negotiated peace. He reported that only 72,000 of the 1.5 million soldiers had rifles, a number hardly sufficient to defend the remaining territories. Nuri Bey thought that Aleppo, Adana, and Mosul would be occupied within a few days and the Straits, İzmir, and Istanbul could come under naval attack.

After hearing this report, Cavid Bey spoke on the dismal state of the finances. Everyone agreed that they now had no alternative to an immediate peace; the problem was that England and France refused to sign one. Finally, on October 30, the Porte was forced to sign an armistice, marking the end of the Great War for the Ottoman state.

The war ended in total defeat, but it had transformed Turkish society. Under the Unionists the war had to define war as a total war. By its very dynamic war became the most all-encompassing phenomenon of the Ottoman Empire, the dominant event to which all other social, political, economic, and cultural processes were subordinated and which, directly or indirectly, affected all the members of society. But this same absorbing quality of war should not make us ignore the different ways in which various groups and individuals were affected. What represented ruin for some became big business for others, and a new class began to emerge. I have discussed the impact of this war on Ottoman society elsewhere. 43

NOTES

- 1. Feroz Ahmad, "Great Britain's Relations with the Young Turks, 1908–1914."
- 2. The most recent monograph on the negotiations for the Ottoman-German alliance is Mustafa Aksakal, *The Ottoman Road to War in 1914*.
- 3. Yusuf Hikmet Bayur, *Türk İnkılâbı Tarihi*, vol. 3, part 1, 82, writes that, when faced with the proposal to disarm or sell the ships as neutrality required, ambassador Hans von Wangenheim used threats to intimidate the Unionists. He said that in that case Berlin would join the Russians and partition the Ottoman Empire. But when the Unionists persisted in their demand to buy the ships he relented and said that he would write to the emperor about the proposal. The proposal to buy the ships is said to have come from Halil Bey, a member of the CUP's inner circle.
- Talat and Halil left Istanbul by car on the morning of August 15 and arrived in Sofia then went on to Bucharest on August 20. Talat returned to Istanbul on

September 2 while Halil stayed on in Bucharest. The purpose of their visits to these capitals was to discuss the attitude of these two neutral states toward the war. Halil returned on September 13. See Istanbul's press, August 17 and September 2, 13, and 14, 1914. Harry N. Howard, *The Partition of Turkey*, 91n44, wrote that Talat's aim was to bring Bulgaria, Romania, and Greece into an alliance with Germany. Bucharest refused to enter into any engagement, however, while Bulgaria promised neutrality but guaranteed Istanbul against an attack from Sofia.

- 5. Feroz Ahmad, "Ottoman Perceptions of the Capitulations, 1800–1914." A more recent study is Mehmet Emin Elmacı, İttihat–Terakki ve Kapitülasyonlar.
- Mehmed Cavid, "Meşrutiyet Devrine Ait Cavit Bey'in Hatarıları" (March 1909– August 1918), *Tanin*, November 12, 1944; Hew Strachan, *The First World War*, 1:676.
- 7. Howard, The Partition, 109-10.
- Ibid. The British ambassador, Sir Louis Mallet, understood that having received German money the Ottomans would soon enter the war.
- 9. Even before the alliance was signed, on July 29 Liman von Sanders informed the emperor of "the unanimous wish of the German military mission to return to Germany in the event of war. The kaiser wrote in the margin: "Must stay there and also foment war and revolt against England. Doesn't he yet know of the intended alliance, under which he is to be Commander in Chief?" Fritz Fischer, Germany's Aims in the First World War, 121.
- 10. Even before the official proclamation of jihad the Porte was publishing pamphlets in Iraq claiming that the war was to be a holy war. See U.S. Archives, Consul Brissel to Morgenthau, Baghdad, August 9, 1914, 867.00/735. The jihad was proclaimed in three stages, on November 7, 11, and 23, 1914. See M. Larcher, *La Guerre Turque dans la Guerre Mondiale*, 45–47 (includes the text); Geoffrey Lewis, "The Ottoman Proclamation of Jihad in 1914," provides translations of the relevant document, 159–65.
- 11. Fischer, Germany's Aims, 312-13.
- 12. The literature on this incident is considerable. See Ziya Şakir Soku, "İttihat ve Terakki Nasıl Doğdu?" (includes navy minister Cemal Paşa's orders to Admiral Souchon). Dan van der Vat, *The Ship That Changed the World*, 188–90.
- 13. On November 1 Cavid described the tense situation among the cabinet members: "Today I did not concern myself with anything. Among my [cabinet] friends no one called or asked after me. Probably everyone is now is using all his power to persuade the grand vezir [not to resign]." On November 2 three ministers resigned. The committee hoped that Cavid, a Unionist minister, would not. But he did. Cavid, "Hatıralar," *Tanin*, November 23, 26, and 30, 1944.
- 14. Ahmed Emin Yalman, *Turkey in the World War*, 76; see also his memoirs, *Gördüklerim ve Geçirdiklerim*, 219.
- Aziz Samih, Büyük Harpte Kafkas Cephesi Hatıraları, 8–9. Samih was serving at the front.
- 16. Tanin, November 9, 1914. Abbas Hilmi, vali of Bursa, had been appointed minister. He was the ruling khedive of Egypt and was in Istanbul when war broke out. He refused to return to Cairo and threw in his lot with the Ottomans. When Britain established its protectorate over Egypt on December 18 Abbas Hilmi

- was deposed and Hussein Kamil was proclaimed sultan under British protection. Strachan, *The First World War*, 732.
- 17. Feroz Ahmad, "1914-1915 Yıllarında İstanbul'da Hint Milliyetçi Devrimciler."
- 18. Abraham Galante, Turcs et Juifs, 45-47.
- 19. W. W. Gottlieb, *Studies in Secret Diplomacy during the First World War*, 83. *Tanin*, May 9–21, 1915, published a series of articles entitled "A Political Comedy."
- Martin Gilbert, Winston S. Churchill, 258 (on British hopes for a revolution in Istanbul if the Straits were forced); W. W. Gottlieb, Studies in Secret Diplomacy during the First World War, 83.
- 21. On Unionist anxiety about Italy joining the Entente, see Cavid's diary, where he also discussed the Austrian ambassador's anxiety: "Hatıralar," *Tanin*, January 3, 1945. Also *Tanin*, May 25 and 26, 1915. The news of Italy's declaration of war overshadowed all else in the press.
- 22. Halil Menteşe, "Eski Meclisi Mebusan Reisi Halil Menteşe'nin Harıtaları," published as *Halil Menteşe'nin Anıları* (Istanbul: Hürriyet Tarih Vakfı, 1986).
- 23. Henry Morgenthau, Ambassador Morgenthau's Story, 262–63.
- 24. See Enver Paşa's speech in parliament: "Enver Paşanin Beyanati," Tasvir-i Efkar, January 12, 1916; and the Istanbul press: "Meclis-i Millimizde Şanlı Bir Gün," İkdam, January 11, 1916, and the editorial "Büyük Zafer Karşısında."
- 25. Even in January General Falkenhayn confided to Admiral Georg von Müller that Istanbul would not be able to carry on the war beyond the autumn of 1916. In March Falkenhayn was all for launching the U-boat campaign at the earliest possible moment in view of the precarious situation of Germany's allies, particularly Turkey, which would not be able to hold out much longer and already showed signs of wanting to make peace. Paradoxical as it may seem, he welcomed the Turkish defeat at Erzurum, because the chances of peace had become more remote as a result. Walter Görlitz, The Kaiser and His Court, 129, 142–43.
- 26. The Istanbul press published the sultan's edict appointing Sharif 'Ali Haydar amir of Mecca, signaling that Sharif Husayn had revolted against the Porte. Only slowly did the public learn about the Arab revolt. See the editorial in *Tanin*, July 26, 1916, and the interview with Talat in *Tasvir-i Efkar*, July 27, 1916.
- Howard, The Partition, 418n178; Carl Mühlmann, Das Deutsch-Turkische Waffenbundis im Weltkriege, 98–101.
- 28. Fischer, Germany's Aims, 301.
- 29. Laurence Evans, United States Policy and the Partition of Turkey, 1914–1924, 43n50. German Radio of March 29 reported that Enver Paşa was in Germany to attend a conference with the German emperor, Paul von Beneckendorff und Hindenburg, and Ludendorff at the headquarters and then went to the western front to visit German troops. See Great Britain, War Office, Daily Review of the Foreign Press, April 2, 1917.
- 30. Cavid, "Hatıralar," *Tanin*, April 27, 1945; Bayur, *Türk İnkılabı Tarihi*, vol. 3, part 4,
- 31. "Sadrazam Pasha's Journey," *Tanin*, May 9, 1917; Cavid, Hatıralar, *Tanin*, April 27, 1945, and *Tanin*, May 7, 1945, which describes Talat's report to the cabinet.
- 32. On the resolution, see Gerald Feldman, ed., German Imperialism, 1914–1918,

- 41–42; and Turkish comment in "İcmal-i Ahval," *İkdam*, July 25, 1917. The pope's note is in Feldman, *German Imperialism*, 81–82.
- 33. B. H. Liddell Hart, The Real War, 1914-1918, 320.
- 34. İkdam, August 2, 1917; and "Harb Devam Ediyor," Tanin, August 6, 1917.
- 35. Near East, October 19, 1917, 495; and November 9, 1917, 555.
- 36. Bayur, Türk İnkilabi Tarihi, vol. 3, part 4, 104-6.
- 37. Ibid., 104-8.
- 38. Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, *Tek Adam*, 184; Bayur, *Türk İnkılabı Tarihi*, vol. 3, part 4, 159–63; Michael Gwynne Dyer, "The End of World War One in Turkey, 1918–19," 208.
- 39. Johann Bernstorff, *Memoirs of Count Bernstorff*, 233. The ambassador was writing to Freiherr von dem Bussche, undersecretary of state for foreign affairs.
- 40. Tanin (and Istanbul Press), March 5, 1918 (my translation).
- 41. Bernstorff, Memoirs, 188.
- 42. Tanin, October 17, 1918; Cavid, "Hatıralar," Tanin, August 14, 1945.
- 43. Feroz Ahmad, "War and Society under the Young Turks, 1908–1918" (article in *Review*).

The Policies of the Entente Powers toward the Ottoman Empire

Altay Cengizer

The triumph of the Young Turk Revolution of July 23, 1908, was sudden, unexpected, always patchy, and never complete in the way revolutions are meant to be. Only after five years, when the assassination of the pro-Young Turk grand vezir Mahmut Şevket Paşa on June 11, 1913, removed the last vestiges of goodwill toward an ever more frenzied opposition, did the Committee of Union and Progress definitively move to consummate its power. Its main opposition, the so-called Liberal Entente in its various forms, was less liberal and less interested in freedom than its name claimed. Their opponents routed and twice dispersed the Young Turks, and the committee was not even in the outskirts of power when the First Balkan War broke out.

PERSISTENT MYTHS ABOUT THE COMMITTEE OF UNION AND PROGRESS

The overarching aim of the Young Turks was to find a way to reverse the decline of the Ottoman Empire. More than anything else, this desire was the principal source of the Unionist élan. The Ottoman Empire was not a colony of the Great Powers, but a keen observer would be tempted to describe it as semicolonized, as the European powers had established control over many aspects of the empire's domestic affairs, including its finances. The "Capitulations" and other machinations of extraterritoriality ran like insidious veins throughout the empire. The contempt of the Young Turks for this subsidiary status within their own empire was perhaps the most powerful influence that shaped their outlook, though they were very careful to avoid turning into rabid antiforeigners. They under-

stood well that the foreign policy of the empire would have to change first if domestic reforms were to stand a chance. According to the dominant paradigm of the Europeans, however, this decrepit eastern empire, unable to change and transform itself, obstinate and immutable, would soon be up for grabs. This was the perennial Eastern Question. Paradoxically, every power was afraid of a *mort subite* (sudden death) before any agreement on how to proceed with the partition was in place. Rather than facing the unknown, the powers seemed to prefer the continuation of an impotent, sluggard Ottoman Empire.

In a sense the revolution was a slap in the face of this ignoble comfort zone of Great Power politics. The Young Turks were determined to revamp the empire, gain back economic and political independence, and address the many weaknesses that haunted the Ottomans. For that to happen they needed a lengthy period of recovery. This proved to be one of their many major dilemmas, as they never had a chance to embark upon the period of reform and recovery that they so much wished for. The unprovoked Italian assault on Tripoli in September 1911 sidelined the recent perturbations of the Annexation crisis of 1908–9, as the Balkan Wars of 1912–13 were to sideline events of the Libyan War of 1911–12. When the Republic of Turkey was declared on October 29, 1923, exactly nine years after the Black Sea incident of October 29, 1914, Turkey had been at war almost incessantly for the last twelve years, three times as much as any other major belligerent power of the Great War.

Ten years after the revolution the Ottoman Empire came to an end. In the meantime the Turkish and Muslim element was expelled from the Balkans under the worst possible conditions: hundreds of thousands were massacred. Remaining territories in Asia were also lost. The most painful human costs were incurred in Anatolia and elsewhere. This was exactly the opposite of what the Young Turks hoped and worked for. A century later, with the spotlight still focused relentlessly on colossal human tragedies, defeat, and its aftermath, the easiest approach is to blame the Young Turks for every Ottoman sin. Accusing them of recklessly entering World War I and gambling away the fortunes of the empire has become the almost-standard narrative in Turkey and abroad. Yet this is simply the reincarnation of the Liberal imperialist narrative of the victors.3 This narrative does not really concern itself with the question of why the Ottomans entered the cauldron of World War I against all odds. The Young Turks' pro-German bias and supposed pan-Turanism are usually brought in as de rigueur explanations, yet neither explains much. As was the case at the time, this narrative totally disregards the woeful predicaments of the Young Turk government, such as the rising threat of full frontal Russian aggression and the increasingly hostile policies of Great Britain toward the Ottoman Empire throughout the Young Turk era. It downplays the way in which the question of the Straits rose to prominence as the Entente showed itself ready to denounce the vital interests of the Ottomans. The utter lack of any credible guarantee of the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire on the part of the Entente is still neglected, even denied. The current narrative likewise conceals how Great Britain was already promising bits and pieces of the Ottoman Empire to other possible allies like Greece and Bulgaria in September 1914, almost two months before the Black Sea incident. Consequently the image of the Committee of Union and Progress today very much overlaps with this Liberal imperialist/Orientalist construction of the British government of the time.

Furthermore, current literature does not seem to give much thought to the effects of the evolution of the European system of alliances on Ottoman diplomacy. The reproclamation of the constitution corresponds to the zenith of Anglo-German antagonism and came after the momentous Anglo-Russian Entente of 1907. The Young Turks' rise to the fore of Ottoman politics was almost a twin birth with the era of crisis preceding World War I. Two months after the revolution the annexation crisis brought the Dual Monarchy to the brink of war with tsarist Russia. This situation ended only after a German ultimatum to Russia, which the Russians never forgave or forgot. From the annexation crisis in 1908–9 to the Liman von Sanders crisis in 1913–14 European powers were able to muddle through. In each case the employment of diplomacy saved Europe from war, except in July 1914. Throughout these years the division of Europe into two opposing blocs deepened and became more entrenched as the flexibilities upon which European diplomacy thrived lessened.

The obvious limitations that these new realignments imposed upon the diplomacy of the Young Turks cannot be discounted. They had to face the realities of a radically different European arena, which did not leave them much room to maneuver. The political landscape of Europe was nowhere near the landscape of the preceding decades. Abdülhamid II had enjoyed a larger playground that he sometimes skillfully used to his advantage. While the conflict between Britain and Germany substantially subsided as August 1914 approached, the relationship between Britain and tsarist Russia progressed to take on the characteristics of a full-fledged alliance. Russian troops were a necessity for Great Britain, which was devoid of a land army that would be of some worth

in continental Europe and in any case was traditionally averse to taking action in the Continent. Britain, like France, could ill afford to lose Russia. To make sure that Russia remained within the fold of the Entente and was not swayed to the side of Germany, the British Liberal government of the time repeatedly signaled the Russians that they would be compensated through Turkish gains. Hence Edward VII's mutterings to Count Alexander Konstantinovich Benckendorff, the Russian ambassador, in 1908 that Russia should have Constantinople and the Straits after all. After 1908 preserving the Russian connection increasingly became the paramount concern of Great Britain, and this fundamental outlook dominated British policy toward the Ottoman Empire. Indeed, more than any other factor, the Anglo-Russian Entente took away the whole breadth of diplomacy from the hands of the Young Turks and left them basically without choices at a time when Europe was moving to the brink of disaster.

One other issue that has been overlooked in current literature is the sheer lack of *Bündnisfähigkeit* (alliance capability) on the part of the Ottoman Empire. Plainly speaking, it did not have the power to attract a prospective ally. The general assumption was that the Ottomans would only be a burden. This was especially true after the defeat of the Balkan Wars and the end of "Turkey in Europe." Except for the relative diplomatic support of Britain during the annexation crisis, it is difficult to speak of any concrete political support for the Ottomans until August 1914. During the Libyan War and the Balkan Wars, the Ottomans received scant diplomatic support (if any). While the European rhetoric favored the Turks during the Libyan War, this did not produce any political backing. Facing fierce and unexpected resistance, Italy chose to bring the war to the shores of the Aegean and the Levant by occupying the Dodecanese Islands and bombarding Beirut. During the Balkan Wars, even the kaiser was in his sporting mood, wishing for the best man to win. The August 2, 1914, alliance agreement with Germany was not easily achieved. Apart from the kaiser's military cabinet and the navy, the German establishment was dead set against any idea of an alliance with the Turks. Hans Freiherr von Wangenheim, the German ambassador in Istanbul, only agreed to an alliance after receiving a severe rebuke from the kaiser himself. Interestingly, the Austrians were weighing on the kaiser, telling him that every individual would be needed in the oncoming struggle for life and death.

The European powers largely ignored the ways in which the decline of the Ottoman Empire, and especially its demise in southeastern Europe,

was affecting the power relationships in Europe. The protracted Libyan War also led the Balkan states to perceive a once in a lifetime opportunity to attack the Ottoman Empire and oust it forever from the Balkans. With that single aim in mind, they were able to set aside their differences. Within the space of some forty days Serbia had increased its land and population twofold. Of course meeting the maximalist demands of the Balkan states was possible only at the expense of the Ottomans. Although the Great Powers had announced at the start of the First Balkan War that they would not permit any territorial changes, at the end they brought enormous pressure to bear on the Ottoman government. Edward Grey was furious that the Ottomans should cede Adrianopolis/ Edirne, their former capital and the last line of defense before Constantinople, to Bulgaria. Hence the almost complete end of Turkey in Europe, and the expiration of the subtle equilibrium in the Balkans. Apart from a few observant Austrians and Fairfax Cartwright, the British ambassador in Vienna, not many seemed to be thinking about the larger implications of removing Turkey from the Balkans. In this sense World War I can indeed be viewed as the Third Balkan War. It was the political and strategic consequences of the Balkan Wars that finally rendered the historic rivalry between Austria-Hungary and tsarist Russia unmanageable.

The Ottomans had no other option but to go through their final years without allies, only to find themselves in the midst of the maelstrom of Great Power politics. World War I did not start because of the Eastern Question. It was more the result of the heated rivalries between the Great Powers directly linked to questions of the European balance of power. Yet the fate of the Ottoman Empire almost immediately became a central issue. Precisely because of this the Ottoman government could not simply bide its time, look around to see who would win the war, and then choose a side.

BRITISH IMPERIALISM AND PLANS TO ERECT ZONES OF INFLUENCE

A close look at Great Britain's general approach to the Ottoman Empire during the Young Turk era brings out the very clear contours of a distinctively negative policy. Insofar as Britain regarded the strengthening of the Ottoman Empire as antithetical to British interests (for reasons expounded below), it can fairly be stated that the two had an antagonistic relationship. While the Young Turks were mute and passive on this point until they entered World War I, however, Britain had the means to act

upon this antagonism. For instance, it persistently opposed the main reforming policies of the Young Turks and actively worked to create zones of influence for itself within the Ottoman Empire. One of the more illustrative episodes of the era makes this point more explicit: the Tigris Valley Railway project. In August 1909 Great Britain demanded a concession to build a separate railway that was proposed to run parallel to the then uncompleted southern section of the Baghdad Railway and tried to coerce the Ottoman government to concede this. The Ottoman rejection culminated in a British ultimatum in April 1910, signaling a more or less definite parting of ways.

Cavid Bey, the Young Turks' famous minister of finance, aptly described how every project and initiative to defend and develop the empire's potential immediately became embroiled in Great Power competition.⁴ The Baghdad Railway was the most prominent of these projects. From the Ottoman point of view, it was a straightforward strategic and economic necessity arising from the objective conditions of the empire. But for Great Britain it was another goal scored by its rival Germany as well as a threat to British superiority in the Persian Gulf. London habitually regarded every development in the area from the perspective of the defense of the Indian Empire. After the Young Turk Revolution Britain hoped that Germany would be forced to capitulate on the Baghdad Railway concession. 5 William Edward Goschen, the British ambassador in Berlin, in a telegram sent to Charles Hardinge, the permanent undersecretary, was clearly alluding to Germany when he expressed his hopes that an established Young Turk administration would benefit Britain more than any other nation.6

As the Anglo-German antagonism went on unabated, however, Britain often resorted to pressure on the Ottomans to achieve its objectives. When the Ottoman government asked to raise the customs tax by 4 percent (from 11 percent to 15 percent) on May 27, 1909, in order to finance the reforms and increase its revenue, the Foreign Office immediately established a direct link between its approval and British political objectives. It referred the issue to the Mesopotamia Railways Committee on the pretext that the increase in revenues should not be used to finance the Baghdad Railway. Two months later the same committee informed the Foreign Office of its suggestions. A separate concession should be given to Britain to build a railway between Baghdad and Basra through the Tigris Valley, which would compete with the German concession. Or, if British financiers reached an agreement with Germany on the construction of the Baghdad-Basra section of the railway, the Ottoman government

should remove article 29 of the 1903 Baghdad Railway Agreement. This article prohibited any construction south of Baghdad before the railway reached Baghdad from the north. Article 29 was intended to avoid a secessionist movement, which an independent link between Baghdad and Basra without the northern connection would have greatly facilitated. The British demand was tantamount to establishing zones of influence within the Ottoman Empire, on the lines of the Anglo-Russian convention of 1907 on Persia. Moreover, a second railway running parallel in the desert did not make any sense. A separate southern section not connected to the north, whether or not it provided the groundwork for a secessionist movement, would have been financial folly, squandering the very limited resources of the Ottomans for no reason.

Gerard Lowther, the British ambassador, received instructions on August 18, 1909, to ask the Ottoman government for a new concession for the Tigris Valley Railway project. Meanwhile Tevfik Paşa, the Ottoman ambassador in London, was called to the Foreign Office, which demanded compensation for the "damages" previously caused for British trade in Mesopotamia, doubling the diplomatic pressure on the Ottomans. At this stage the Ottoman government courteously objected to the project, and Britain refused to approve the increase of the customs duty.

The Ottoman government was soon to face another stiff test in real-politik. Grand vezir Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa put it succinctly when he said that the Ottomans were between the hammer and the anvil because of conflicting pressures from the Great Powers. ¹⁰ Rıfat Paşa, minister of foreign affairs, once again told Lowther that they would have plenty of time to evaluate the project for the Tigris Valley Railway. The issue could be addressed after the section of the Baghdad Railway between al-Khalif in the north and Baghdad was completed. He added that the Ottoman government might prefer to construct the Baghdad-Basra section itself after all. In view of the agreement with Germany on advancing the railway to Baghdad, the Ottomans did not wish to risk a dispute with that power. In the telegram on this meeting Lowther did not neglect to state what seemed obvious to him: "Clearly, the Turks will be able to set their own conditions for the Basra section of the Railway once they reached Baghdad."

Meanwhile news reached London indicating that the Ottoman government had indeed intensified its efforts to complete the section between al-Khalif and Baghdad and that the Ottomans were trying to find additional sources of revenue. On April 18 Grey painted a bleak picture and reminded Lowther of what they had been doing in favor of the "ungrateful" new regime:

The fact that a concession for a "defensive" railway to be built along the Tigris Valley has been brushed aside in spite of everything HM's Government did to assist the new régime, especially the friendly and even exuberant financial and moral support we demonstrated during the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908–1909 is proof that our friendship is not appreciated at the Porte.... It is evident that the Ottoman Government has instead chosen to come under the influence of the biased and unjustified suspicions of others in the region. ¹²

But the political situation around Basra would not have vindicated Grey's allegations. After all, Britain had already signed an agreement with the sheikh of Kuwait back in 1899, forbidding him to accept any foreign representative without British consent. His northern neighbor, the sheikh of Muhammerah (modern Khorramshahr), was under British protection. Great Britain was constantly pressing the Ottomans to gain complete control of the petroleum and river trade as well as irrigation works in Mesopotamia. The Ottoman government did not need another example to see what was going on. Against this background the Ottomans saw the Tigris Valley Railway project as a major initiative that would transform the already strong British presence in the Basra region into a zone of influence.

On April 20 Lowther received another telegram from Grey, who used unusually tough language. He reiterated that Britain would never accept any request to increase the Ottoman customs duties until a concession was granted for Tigris Valley Railway. Moreover, he made it clear that the decision of the Ottoman government regarding the concession would determine to a large extent the future approach of Britain to the Ottoman Empire. Grey asked Lowther to convey this strong message to the Porte in the intended tone and wording. This constitutes something very akin to an ultimatum and can best be described as such. In Grey's words the future conduct of Great Britain toward the Ottoman Empire was now dependent on the resolution of the Tigris Valley Railway issue in accordance with Britain's wishes. If the Ottomans continued to resist the idea, they would have no friend in Great Britain.

The Ottoman government gave its response to the ultimatum ten days later not in Constantinople but in London. On April 30, 1910, Tevfik Paşa told Grey only this: "The Ottoman government will not grant additional concessions to another country because a concession for the construction of a railway on a single route has already been given to other groups." This is the moment when the Ottomans rejected Britain's Tigris Valley

Railway project in absolute terms, thereby taking a resolute stand against a concession that would have no other result than precipitating the division of Ottoman lands into zones of influence (and hence the partition of their empire).

In early 1909 France had wanted to teach a lesson to the Young Turks, who were trying to nationalize the régie des tabacs (tobacco monopoly). They refused to give a much-needed loan to the Ottoman government that would have allowed it to pay the long overdue salaries of state employees and keep the state afloat. As the Young Turk delegation left Paris for London empty handed, France asked Britain to take the same line. London complied. Hence Britain had already shown that its Ottoman policy would always tend to be superseded by its European policy and European considerations. But the April 20 ultimatum is unique in language, stark, and uncoordinated with any other power. It was a powerful omen showing that Great Britain saw its relations with the Ottoman Empire as antagonistic. Indeed this ultimatum can be viewed as a watershed moment, because it shows to what extent Britain was determined to pursue a narrow and parochial approach to the Ottoman Empire, especially when Germany was involved at the other end of the rope. It also demonstrated that Britain had no scruples in disclosing its hostility. The same rugged language was to be echoed during the Balkan Wars in Grey's persistent demands on the Turks to evacuate Adrianopolis in favor of Bulgaria.¹⁵

Whereas a 4 percent increase in the customs duties would have augmented state revenues and provided for a more stable financial base for the reforms, Liberal Britain, enemy of "Abdul the damned," was totally disinterested in this aspect. On the contrary, it perceived the request as an opportunity to put further pressure on the Ottoman government to accept a railway concession that made no strategic and economic sense for the Ottomans. Great Britain had scant (if any) interest in helping the new regime in Turkey, though the Young Turks made every effort to show that they were staunch supporters of Britain and France. It is quite revealing that they even refused to see a delegation of "Young Egyptians" from Cairo because this would have caused Britain to suspect that the Young Turks were interested in stirring up revolution elsewhere.

A relationship is antagonistic when any initiative taken by one side to strengthen and develop its economy and strategic worth is perceived by the other as directly threatening. This was how the Liberal imperialist Whig government perceived the idea of a stronger and more powerful Ottoman Empire. Whenever the Young Turks took steps that they deemed necessary to move forward, survive, and reform, they had to face

Britain's resistance and active intervention. Indeed the hostile relations in Europe at the time were not confined to Anglo-German and Austro-Russian antagonisms. Lurking behind these was a more concealed but just as valid Anglo-Turkish antagonism. Looking at the results of World War I, its enlarged theater, and the end of tsarist Russia, it would not be an exaggeration to say that its consequences were far from secondary. ¹⁶

The Tigris Valley Railway project highlights the imperialist mind-set and how the Great Powers viewed the rest of the world. The barely disguised real objective behind Britain's diplomatic attack on the Ottoman Empire was to rein in Germany and ensure for Britain a controlling stake in the strategically important southern section of the Baghdad Railway. The harsh diplomatic tactics that Britain did not hesitate to employ against the Porte clearly demonstrated that the Ottoman Empire had ceased to be an important consideration in the larger scheme of things. Faced with dogged British pursuit of the Tigris Valley Railway concession, Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa privately told Adolf Freiherr Marschall von Bieberstein, the German ambassador, that he was willing to give Britain 1 or 2 million pounds a year rather than permit a large-scale commercial enterprise controlled exclusively by the British, which would lead to further encroachments by the British Empire into the interior of the country.¹⁷ The fear that creation of such zones of influence would serve as rough drafts for future division was real. The British use of the term "control" in their draft agreement seemed to confirm Ottoman fears. 18

The Young Turks' worries were far from being limited to Great Britain and tsarist Russia. Other powers also had putative zones of interest in mind. For example, when the French heard that a British company was to be allowed to construct the ports of Samsun and Trabzon, they voiced their objection, claiming that northern Black Sea region had been "designated" as theirs. ¹⁹ Even Austria-Hungary and Italy, as lower-ranking powers, had their own ideas and had prepared maps with contradicting claims.

RUSSIA'S GENERAL APPROACH AND TSARIST POLICIES TOWARD THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

Back in Europe the deterioration of relations was not confined to the two opposing alliances. Intra-alliance conflicts were not uncommon. George Buchanan, the British ambassador in St. Petersburg, complained that Russia selfishly interpreted the understanding of 1907, still kept twelve thousand troops in northern Persia, and had established control

in Azerbaijan in defiance of the agreements. Grey had to admit that the Russians were ready to invade Persia if it came to it but Britain was not. Tsarist Russia was the juggernaut in Persia, busily employing the most advanced imperialist tactics of the time, including bringing Cossack populations to settle in northern Persia. By 1914 these tactics could no longer be concealed. Walter Beaupre Townley, the British representative in Persia, duly informed London that every day one hundred or two hundred Russians were settling illegally on extensive lands obtained by sheer force. In fact the settlers had received secret instructions from St. Petersburg, including information on how to acquire land and new farming methods. The settlers were also furnished with maps showing arable lands. Buchanan objected to this state of affairs. The official response of Russia, however, was that its intervention in northern and northwestern Persia was a result of the realities of geography, that the rights of the Russians and other foreigners in Persia had to be protected, and that Russia had already made great sacrifices in order to establish order and prevent the country from being plunged into chaos.²⁰

It is important to note that the atmosphere of intimidation created by Russia often resulted in Great Britain and France footing the bill for increased Russian activism in the Middle East. In Russian eyes the timidity of its Entente partners justified St. Petersburg's policies of establishing hegemony in what was then the "near abroad." The whole gamut of expansionist policies of tsarist Russia directed at northern Persia did not escape the attention of the Young Turks. Russia believed that the only way for it to remain a Great Power and to be perceived and accepted as such was to establish dominance in neighboring areas and, when possible, to absorb them entirely. The realities of geography, establishment of order, and similar excuses could well be used even more effectively in the context of eastern Anatolia. At any time of its choosing Russia could have opted to become a troublemaker there. This fear goes far to explain the Young Turk government's readiness in early 1914 to arrive at a solution that would help stabilize eastern Anatolia. Hence they accepted two foreign governors-general to administer the six eastern vilayets quite independently.²¹ Indeed a deal was struck in February. After some haggling on salaries, one of the two officials was on his way to assume his duties when the July crisis stopped the process.

Nothing much would point to a degree of insincerity on the part of the Ottomans. The very recent experience of the Liman von Sanders crisis had only increased their belief that tsarist Russia was running after them at a time when everyone suspected that the Ottoman Empire's long-expected death was about to occur. After the demise of Turkey in Europe, the end of Turkey in Asia was around the corner. The Unionists had embarked on the far-reaching 1914 Reform Program after a realistic assessment of how things stood in the east and the more general political-military situation.

In this context Britain's persistence in exerting pressure on the Ottoman government in late 1913 and early 1914 to accept the appointment of a single Russian governor to be responsible for all six eastern vilayets was tantamount to calling for an outright breakup of eastern Anatolia. It would be an understatement to say that this policy was ill advised. After all, the Ottomans would have known quite well how the Russians were carving up spaces for themselves in adjacent northern Persia in defiance of the 1907 conventions. It can hardly be said that they were strangers to general Russian attitudes. Yet, once again, Great Britain's paramount concern was not to lose Russia, and it was ready to go far in order to placate its Entente partner.

The Liman von Sanders crisis, which lasted from December 1913 to February 1914, was to be the last in the series of major European crises before the outbreak of World War I.²² The crux of the issue was Russia's steadfast opposition to any effort aimed at strengthening the defensive capabilities of the Ottoman Empire. When Britain agreed to build a dreadnought and other warships for the Ottomans and also to send an admiral and a retinue of officers to head the Ottoman navy and train its personnel, St. Petersburg was much irritated and opposed the delivery of the warships. Indeed the issue predates the appointment of Otto Liman von Sanders to head the First Army Corps based in Constantinople. For the time being Russia preferred to see the Ottoman Empire continue to exist as an impotent, anachronistic eastern empire without allies. It had already decided to prevent by any means the establishment of any other supremacy but its own in the Straits area. Only Russia should have the last say on the Straits, and S. D. Sazonov wanted friend and foe to understand this point beyond a modicum of doubt. The Liman von Sanders crisis showed that Russia was determined not to let any other power capitalize on the weakness of the Ottoman Empire.²³ Even Russia's Entente partners thought that the appointment of Liman von Sanders to head the First Army Corps warranted no such alarm and frenzied diplomacy. Yet Russia was exceptionally aggressive: Sazonov seriously considered waging war against the Ottomans, as the accounts of the Council of Ministers clearly demonstrate. Sazonov first proposed to Russia's Entente partners that they impose a financial boycott on the Ottoman Empire. Within a

few weeks he was talking of severing all diplomatic relations and starting a war on the Ottomans.

Russian furor manifested at this time, only a few months before the July crisis, reveals the extent to which St. Petersburg was inclined to aggravate crisis situations. Even Arthur Nicolson, the permanent undersecretary and probably the most unabashedly pro-Russian diplomat in the Foreign Office, who was proud to have negotiated the 1907 conventions while serving as ambassador to St. Petersburg, viewed Russian outbursts as not only baseless and wildly exaggerated but dangerous as well. Although he always feared that Russia could be swayed in other directions, this time he was afraid that Russia would launch an attack against eastern Anatolia, thereby forcing Germany's hand to come to the support of the Ottoman Empire and triggering a complete war in Europe. He could not easily shake off this fear.²⁴

The notion that eastern Anatolia would fall to Russia was commonplace and seemed even more credible in the wake of the Balkan Wars. Of course, Nicolson had nothing against the Russians taking over eastern Anatolia. But he feared that Russian action would precipitate the premature partition of the Ottoman Empire before some preliminary agreements reflecting a general European understanding were reached and the necessary balances were in place.

Russia was not successful in receiving the support of its allies. Still, Sazonov found a way to use this crisis to try to augment the Entente with Britain. He now wanted the relationship to be defined by specific mutual obligations. His demands for co-planning and naval cooperation would have raised the Anglo-Russian Entente to the level of an alliance and save it, in his eyes, from being just an understanding. This was not what the British, still averse to committing themselves to any definite position, wanted to see, although Britain had already given something more than a promise to France regarding the defense of the channel.²⁵ In the end the British government thought it should find a way to conciliate the Russian demands for a more binding relationship and agreed to start talks on naval cooperation. This was described as a "stopgap" measure in order to avoid offending Russia. Yet the news that negotiations would commence between Britain and Russia to coordinate their naval forces spread quickly. Whether or not these negotiations had substance, Germany felt vindicated in its well-known fear that it was indeed being outflanked by its enemies.

As detailed instructions for the British delegation that would conduct the naval negotiations were being drawn up, the government felt the

need starkly to highlight a proviso that made it clear that the negotiations could not touch upon the Straits issue until Russia and Germany resolved their dispute. It is all the more interesting because it had been some time since the Liman von Sanders crisis had receded. It seems that Britain understood the new assertiveness on the part of Russia and detected how it was shoring up new positions in the Near East. The reason for this guarded attitude was not that Britain objected to Russian desires in the context of the nearing demise of the Ottoman Empire. The most experienced of the Great Powers was only refusing at that relatively early stage to give a blank check to Russia in the absence of an agreement that took care of commensurately hard-core British interests.

It was also during the Liman von Sanders crisis that Russia started to articulate and modernize its Straits policy, which had been in the doldrums since Alexander Izvolsky's blunder at Buchlau in 1908 led to the annexation crisis. As the minutes of the Council of Ministers meeting in February 1914 and the memorandum of Count Nicolas de Basily make clear, Russia understood that achieving its historic aims in regard to the Straits could only be possible in the context of a great upheaval, when the wrath of unprecedented turmoil wreaked Europe. Russia also understood that in order to be able to retain the Straits it would have to take control of both sides of the Marmara Sea.²⁷ Hence Grey's description of Constantinople and the Straits as the "glavnyi priz" (great prize) of the war.

Indeed Constantinople and the Straits issue were at the forefront of Russia's preoccupations by 1914. The existence of a tacit agreement between Great Britain and tsarist Russia quickly brought the fate of the Ottomans to the fore. In the end the Great War was fought over the future of the Middle East just as it was fought over the future of the European balance of power and dynastic empires.

THE EXISTENTIAL THREAT TO THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AND THE "NECESSARY" WAR

Probably the single most important event that poisoned the already strained Ottoman relations with Great Britain was the seizure of the warships *Sultan Osman* and *Reşadiye* on July 31, days before the outbreak of the war and the signing of the Turco-German alliance agreement on August 2. The seizure was perceived as an open act of aggression and caused tremendous outrage in public opinion and in the Ottoman government. It was a terrible blow to British prestige in the Ottoman Empire: the British were now regarded as thieves. The ships were fully paid for by public

subscription. More than five hundred Turkish officials, sailors, and enlisted men were already at Armstrong and Vickers shipyards in Newcastle upon Tyne to sail the battleships home, where they were very eagerly awaited. The minister of the navy, Cemal Paşa, had ensured that the last payments were made and sent in July. Winston Churchill, the first lord of admiralty, who had ordered the confiscation of the ships, did not neglect to let the Ottoman government know that the amount paid for the dreadnought and the battleship would be repaid by England in weekly installments, adding insult to injury. The amount of these installments was a paltry few thousand pounds, and Ottoman officials computed that the full repayment would take decades. With the entry of the Ottoman Empire into the Great War, the issue of installments disappeared completely. In the end Britain had acquired the renamed ships HMS *Erin* and HMS *Agincourt* for nothing.

Interestingly enough, at the same time the French seized fifty monoplanes that were being built for the Ottoman Empire. These seizures cannot be seen solely as scrambling after munitions. They disclose that Great Britain and the Entente in general lacked any coherent strategy to try to win over the Ottomans and already (at the end of July and in the first week of August) had no regard for Ottoman security concerns. It should be stressed that Britain did not even consider delaying the delivery of the battleships in order to prevent spoiling its chances of alliance with the Ottoman Empire. It felt no need to wait until the alliance configurations were more readily recognizable. Britain seemingly had no intention of avoiding the total alienation of Ottoman public opinion. In its hubris Britain did not even stop to think about how it was jeopardizing the position of the so-called moderates in the Ottoman cabinet, let alone that of Admiral Arthur Limpus, the British commander of the Ottoman fleet.²⁹ The outright confiscation of the battleships shows that Great Britain did not have much interest in the future of its relations with the Ottoman Empire.

Britain had been following an openly pro–Greek policy since the First Balkan War and had raised no objection to the Greek occupation of the Aegean Islands. Already in December 1913 Eyre Crowe, the extremely influential head of the Near Eastern Department and future permanent undersecretary, wanted the battleships being built for the Ottoman Empire to be given to Greece. ³⁰ Eleftherios Venizelos had also asked London not to give the ships to the Ottomans. Russia had been making clear that it was against Britain helping the Ottoman Empire strengthen its navy and had also asked that the ships be retained. Thus the decision to seize

the two ships falls in line with the thinking and general approach of the Entente to the Ottoman Empire. Britain, already predisposed to comply with the Greek and Russian requests, immediately set to work to win the Greeks over to the Entente.³¹

Great Britain sided with the enemies of the Ottomans at a very early stage because of its own military-strategic outlook and on the basis of what it perceived its stakes to be. It was a deliberate choice on the part of Britain to render its Ottoman diplomacy negative. Britain was just doing what was to be expected of a great imperialist power: acting in accordance with its perceived higher interests and readily obliging those that it wanted to see on its side.

In the wake of the flight of the German warships *Goeben* and *Breslau* to the Bosphorus, Britain instituted blockades (in and of themselves a reason for war) at the mouth of the Dardanelles and at Basra. Furthermore, it chose to apply them very strictly. On the eve of a harsh winter the British blockade practically forbade entry of coal to Constantinople on the pretext that it would be used for the German ships. Normal trading vessels carrying perishable goods for daily consumption were not able to leave or enter the Dardanelles. On the other end, Indian forces had been stationed in Bahrain in support of the blockade at Basra and had explicit orders to move to Basra at the slightest provocation. Under the circumstances "provocation" was a dangerously loose, ill-advised term. Britain did not stop at actively pursuing the blockades. It was promising Adrianopolis and Thrace to Bulgaria and Smyrna (İzmir) with its interior to Greece to win them over to the Entente. With the same purpose it was promising yet undefined regions of Anatolia to Italy.

The Union and Progress Government was facing intense dilemmas. After the loss of the Balkans and the ensuing human tragedies of the massacre and expulsion of the Turkish and Muslim population from the Balkans, the empire was at its lowest ebb ever. It was not even convalescing, and the general paradigm in Europe predicted that the final days of the Ottoman Empire were nigh. At a time when even the Great Powers were prepared to go to great lengths in order to maintain their alliances and gain new allies, large or small, the Ottomans were seen as deficient on many counts. Since 1908 Great Britain had already rejected at least four serious and well-meaning Ottoman attempts at alignment or alliance with the Entente. The German establishment was also against any idea of alliance with the Ottoman Empire and remained aloof and cool even in August 1914. Yet the sheer weight of geography, history, and realpolitik should have dispelled any confusion about the gravity of the

situation and made clear that the Ottoman Empire would soon be drawn into war.

The threats that the Ottomans faced were far from being imaginary. In a letter dated August 30, 1914, the tsar had ordered Count Illarion Ivanovich Vorontsov-Dashkov, the governor-general of the Caucasus, to start preparing the grounds for insurrection and arming the rebellious Armenians. The Ottoman Empire was at the edge of the precipice: to think otherwise required denial of the stark realities on the ground. That would also have been tantamount to denying the existence of the perennial Eastern Question and how resilient it still was. When August 1914 arrived, the Ottoman Empire and Russia had already gone to war thirteen times (almost every twenty-fifth year). Wishful thinking persisted within the cabinet and elsewhere that the empire would somehow remain intact and untouched by the Great War. But that was only human nature, not statesmanship. Nor did the Ottomans have any basis for the forlorn hope of retaining a meaningful neutrality. The Ottoman Empire required all of its munitions from abroad and had a paltry 92,000 Turkish pounds in its coffers at the end of June 1914.

The Ottoman government simply did not have the luxury to vacillate between action and procrastination, like Italy or Greece, for example. It was in this context that the Unionist leadership struck an agreement of alliance with Germany on August 2. It was a purely defensive instrument, basically stemming from Ottoman fears of tsarist Russia. The agreement made no mention of any other country but Russia. Except for the military cabinet of the kaiser and the German navy, Enver Paşa lacked any support whatsoever within Germany. Indeed the Ottoman-German alliance was not easily achieved. It should be seen as a success of historic proportions on the part of the Ottoman government, because it gave the Ottomans a Great Power ally for the first time in six decades after the Crimean War.

Of course the world of the Crimean War had ended long before, and the ancient Anglo-Ottoman friendship was a thing of the past, spoken of nostalgically. Some Ottoman politicians, primarily the insipid opponents of the Union and Progress Party in the so-called Liberal Entente (including the Unionists' nemesis Kamil Paşa) totally failed to see the many implications of the new dynamics in Europe and the new alignments, first and foremost the Anglo-Russian Entente. For reasons that only he would have known, Kamil Paşa cherished an inexplicably deep affection for the British royal family, especially King Edward, to whom he was warmly attached.

The extremely strict, nonsensical application of the blockades imposed by Great Britain at the mouth of the Dardanelles and at Basra should have been revealing enough. No movement was allowed, and both exits of the empire were mined. On October 21, 1914, a week before the Black Sea incident, HMS Espiégle in the Royal Navy squadron blockading Basra had received instructions to fire on any Ottoman vessel that attempted to clear the mines laid on the Shatt al-Arab.³³ Why did Britain use the blockades as provocations rather than keeping them as precautionary measures? Of course, Britain had a very large Muslim population within its empire and could have faced opposition from within or even subversion from the Muslim elements in the empire if it was perceived to be the aggressor. It would have been much easier to explain war against the Ottomans if they were provoked into action first. This would have allowed Britain to depict the Ottoman leadership as irresponsible and reckless, composed of pan-Turanist, pro-German gamblers, while successfully pushing into oblivion the many intricacies of the situation. The Entente and, to be precise, Great Britain more than any other member of the bloc needed this phantasmagoria. They had to discredit the Young Turks not only for the Muslim population but also for their domestic constituencies, who could not easily be convinced of the merits of letting Russia rule in the Ottoman capital and in the Straits. As a matter of fact Britain and France soon came together at the Anglo-French Muslim Conference of December 30-31, 1914, which agreed in principle to pool ideas and materials in anti-Turkish propaganda directed at their Muslim populations. The British suggested that this should take the form of branding the Young Turks as "free-thinking internationalists" masquerading as Muslims.³⁴ Hence the persisting belief that the Young Turks were philistines and atheists who had no considerations for Muslim values and interests and pan-Turanists who recklessly entered World War I on the side of Germany.³⁵

Notwithstanding the attitudes of the Entente, the Unionist government finally exhausted the means at its disposal to come to terms with the bloc. Indeed, even after the agreement with Germany was reached, Enver Paşa wanted to strike a modus vivendi with Russia. He told Gen. Mikhail Leontiev, the Russian military attaché, on August 5 that he was ready for an arrangement along the lines of the Küçük Kaynarca agreement of 1774, which had spelled out Russian superiority in the Black Sea for the first time, and that Russia and the Ottoman Empire need not go to war. Sazonov did seriously consider the matter and thought that it might be worth Russia's while. The question of the Straits could be taken

up later under better circumstances rather than right away. Enver's approach to Russia can be seen as a continuation of Talat's offer of alliance with Russia in May 1914 in Yalta. Though Sazonov considered Talat's words a bit vague, he nevertheless agreed that reaching a temporary modus vivendi would be of benefit and let Russia gain precious time. It was Grey who stopped any movement along these lines. The talks of August 5 also went nowhere. It was Grey, again, who reacted strongly against the idea and killed it.

It is difficult to ascribe duplicity to Enver Paşa because he was seeking an agreement with Russia just a few days after having signed an agreement with Germany. Rather, his last-ditch attempt to find common ground with Russia shows the severe limitations that the Ottomans were faced with and how hapless their status was. Moreover, between August 2 and 5 the world had turned upside down. Great Britain entered the war on August 4. The Ottoman government was merely seeking some solid protection, some form of guarantee against incipient Russian aggression. In their minds this should not have meant war with Great Britain. Indeed even the German government continued to hope until the last minute that Britain would stay neutral and avoid entering the war.

Talks between the Entente and the Ottomans lingered on for some time. As the Liberal imperialist narrative and its modern versions never fail to point out, it is true that the Entente offered to guarantee the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire. But it was a sham offer. The Ottoman government demanded that this guarantee be given on a bilateral basis rather than by the Entente, which was at the end of the day a political construct. But the Entente members refused. When the Ottomans asked what would happen when the Entente ceased to exist, they received no credible answer to that very pertinent and intelligent question. It should not have been difficult to imagine the day when the Turks would be told that the guarantee had been given at the start of the war and that the Entente was a thing of the past.

The Ottoman government also wanted the restoration of the Aegean Islands occupied by Greece during the Balkan Wars and the return of Eastern Rumelia, passed over to Bulgaria by a sleight-of-hand. Both were deemed strategically vital for the empire. Irredentist Greece, based on the islands that were only a few miles off the Anatolian coast, could have conducted subversive action in the Aegean region by arming separatist elements or provided a safe haven for anyone breaking the law. Eastern Rumelia had a large Turkish and Muslim population and was on the way to Istanbul. The Ottomans' wishes were confined to regaining the

adjacent territories lost to Greece and Bulgaria in 1913. In comparison to other irredentist and expansionist agendas vainly put forward at the time, their demands were far from reflecting an opportunistic frame of mind. Moreover, the Ottoman government had signaled its readiness to forgo either of the two demands, provided that the other was accepted by the Allies. Yet the Entente did not wish to consider meeting either one. After all, Grey was working hard to win over Greece, so restitution of the islands to the Ottoman Empire was anathema. Grey was also promising still more Turkish territory to Bulgaria.

As weeks passed Constantinople increasingly felt the effects of the blockade at the Aegean mouth of the Straits, taxing its strength in every manner. Yet the Ottomans could have tried to find ways to postpone action on the Aegean situation. Once Russia started to mine the other end at the Black Sea, however, the Ottomans were left with no other choice but to react and break their way through. Hence the October 29 incident and the bombardment of Odessa and Sevastopol. Russian mining of the Black Sea would not only have completed the suffocating blockade but would have doomed the Ottoman Empire. The Black Sea route from Constantinople to Hopa was vital to the defense of the Caucasus front, which in turn held the key for central Anatolia. In the total absence of dependable roads, the Black Sea connection provided the only reliable supply route; without it no meaningful Caucasus front would have existed.³⁶

Yet Enver Paşa had an even more coercive reason to dismiss inaction and enter the fray. The threat of a unilateral agreement between Germany and Russia that had been hanging in the air now seemed to be a real possibility in the wake of the Russian defeat at Tannenberg. This was not a figment of Enver Paşa's imagination. In fact, from the start of the war until Russia's withdrawal, the probability of a separate agreement between Russia and Germany preoccupied Russia's Entente allies. Having been routed in Tannenberg and lost 90,000 soldiers, Russia could well be favorably disposed toward German offers. An agreement between the two would have allowed Germany to concentrate fully on the western front, while leaving Russia comfortable enough. From a certain vantage point Britain and France had an implacable enemy in imperial Germany. But the same cannot really be said in the Russian context. Apart from pride and pan-Slavism and some mutual dislikes, it is difficult to distinguish an overriding, hard-core Russian interest at stake in the Great War (unless of course, Russia received Constantinople and the Straits). But not everyone in Russia was after the historic aims of Russia along the shores

of the Black Sea, the wording used by the tsar in his proclamation of war. Certainly the conservative camp and many influential Russians believed that Russia needed an agreement with Germany as soon as possible. What if Germany offered the great prize? Russia might simply cease hostilities and change camps. This likelihood was as frightening for Britain and France as it was for the Ottomans. Rumors started to circulate that it was bound to happen after all. In fact Sazonov had masterfully played on precisely this fear as he led his allies to the agreement on Constantinople and the Straits.

According to the agreement of September 6, 1914, the Entente allies promised not to conclude separate treaties with the enemy until victory was achieved. But everyone knew that such promises did not count for much in a world of harsh realities. After all, the Russian lines had been broken at Tannenberg. People increasingly speculated that the conclusion of a separate agreement was imminent. Indeed these rumors were later proven to be true. It was confirmed that the pro-German elements around the tsar were gaining traction at the time.

The string of Germany's eastern victories could well have ushered in a compromise solution, with an offer on the Straits as the catalyst. This was precisely the threat made by Wangenheim if the Ottoman Empire continued to stand aside and not take action against the enemy. The issue of the probability of a separate German-Russian agreement aside, Germany was bringing pressure to bear on the Ottomans to open a new front against Russia in the Caucasus.

The very scant material pertaining to the twilight meeting at the house of Said Halim Paşa in Yeniköy, at which the leadership debated the increasingly dire situation of the Ottoman Empire, provides a few lines attributed to Enver Paşa: "They are winning, we must enter the war too." The dominant interpretation of this specific sentence, developed in tandem with British propaganda of the time, is that Enver Paşa, being the gambler and pan-Turanist that he was reputed to be, wanted to enter the war recklessly and as soon as possible on the winning side to make sure that the Ottomans received their share in the spoils of war. But what if he was solely referring to the *force majeure* of preempting a separate Russo-German agreement centering on the Straits? After all, this was the essence of Wangenheim's menacing words, condemning the Ottomans for not taking action. The interpretation of Enver Paşa as reckless assumes that he was acting opportunistically, while the interpretation that he was concerned solely with the Straits assumes the reverse. But what factors really count during such decisive make-or-break moments? Do leaders

always look at the circumstances through a window of opportunity even when threats are mounting all around them?

The Ottomans did not have a world of opportunities awaiting them. They were surrounded by huge existential threats, and Enver Paşa would surely have distinguished between opportunities and threats. He was not a gambler, as his opponents and personal enemies in the Entente camp and within the domestic opposition have made us believe. He was simply not a defeatist. In view of the circumstantial evidence and the threats emanating from the Entente, along with increasingly severe blockades and a deteriorating strategic context in the Black Sea and the Caucasus, he would have been court-martialed if he did not act and enter World War I on the side of Germany, in the absence of any other alternative. While the Sarıkamış operation is much cited by the detractors of the CUP as another gamble that was indeed ill fated, it was also a military necessity if Russia was to be kept at bay before summer arrived, offering more propitious circumstances for the tsarist armies to advance toward inner Anatolia. With the hubris of hindsight we are tempted to think that the opportunity aspect prevailed in the Ottoman decision to enter World War I, instead of seeing the evident and real circumstances as well as the grave threats facing the Ottoman Empire.

As Michael A. Reynolds argues, "a sober vision grounded in concrete geopolitical reasoning, and not any nationalist or proto-nationalist ideology of identity, guided those conducting policy towards Russian Empire in the final years of the Ottoman Empire."³⁷ But the victors' explanation inundated the whole area of research and scrutiny and caused highly important details to fall through the cracks into oblivion. The allegation of pro-German bias within the Young Turk leadership is rubbish thrown in the face of scholarship unless it is considered against the background of the persistently anti-Ottoman policies of the Entente, especially Great Britain. Whatever that particular narrative claims, Great Britain and the Entente had more than a fair chance to avoid direct confrontation with the Ottoman Empire. Yet Great Britain allowed this chance to pass in front of its eyes and refused to offer the Ottomans the benefits of an alliance or the prerequisite conditions for meaningful neutrality. Instead Britain chose to risk facing the Turks over the length of the still huge geography of the Ottoman Empire.

Great Britain and its Entente allies made no substantial attempt whatever to win over the Ottoman Empire. One reason for this was the dismal British assessment of Turkish capabilities, which went hand in hand with the many prejudices developed over time and calcified in the mind-set

of the governing elite (as well as the judgmental attitudes of the Whig establishment, in the time-honored tradition of William Gladstone). Yet this was the general assessment in Europe. But it would be an oversimplification to describe the attitude of the Entente toward the Ottoman Empire during the crucial three-month period before it was left no other choice but to become a belligerent power as merely dilettante. The Allies (again mainly Great Britain) went far beyond being superficial and careless. The Entente approach was also scheming and provocative, resting on the self-fulfilling prophecy that the Ottomans had already sided with Germany. The German warships *Goeben* and *Breslau* (which, after a long pursuit in the Mediterranean by the blundering royal navy were able to find refuge in the Bosphorus) are often cited as proof. The Entente vaingloriously insisted that these ships be handed over with their German crews. The Ottoman government could hardly respond favorably to this. It would have cost the Ottomans their only chance to have a Great Power ally, and it was also seen as unethical. The ships had already been added to the Ottoman navy, a creative solution under the circumstances, which Talat had come up with. The "Ottomanization" of the Goeben (Sultan Yavuz Selim) and Breslau (Midilli) should have limited the damage to Ottoman neutrality. After all, the situation was totally sui generis. Yet the Allies showed no evidence of nuanced thinking.

The Entente was opposed to the Ottoman Empire not because it had turned into a German ally but because the grand balance among the existing and prospective Entente allies could only be achieved by offering and dividing Ottoman lands. This was precisely why the Entente had been able to pursue "constructive" diplomacy with other prospective allies. It felt that its hands were free to offer Ottoman territory. Depicting the Ottoman leadership as irreconcilably pro-German served other purposes.

In 1914 eastern Poland was part of tsarist Russia; no one in Russia would continue to fight for a thirty-kilometer strip called Posen. Nothing but the *glavnyi priz* would make meaningful the great sacrifices that Russia had to incur, even at the risk of revolution at home (to the horror of the pro-German establishment of landowners and other aristocrats around the tsar). Grey and the Foreign Office understood this quite well. They knew that Russia would not continue to fight for long in pursuit of imaginary and undefined war aims and that only a more solid, galvanizing war aim could compel all the Russians to keep fighting. In any case Sazonov's perseverance and skillful diplomacy left no way to escape or postpone the Straits issue. His threats to resign and let the events take

their course unless an agreement was reached very much frightened his Entente interlocutors. The influence of the conservative camp that would have preferred to reach a unilateral agreement with Germany seemed to be rising. Therefore to view the March 30, 1915, agreement among the Entente powers to promise Constantinople and the Straits with all of its hinterland to Russia as the well-deserved punishment for the Ottoman Empire for having entered World War I on Germany's side would be a gross oversimplification.³⁸ Whether or not the Ottoman Empire entered the war, tsarist Russia would have moved at some stage by every means at its disposal (diplomatic and otherwise) toward gaining the Straits. World War I was exactly the type of major European upheaval thought to be the precondition for Russia to move toward the Straits. Tsarist Russia had already made its mind up that its development as a Great Power could not be achieved without Russian control over the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. Only that could be the possible final solution to the perennial question of the Straits.³⁹ Indeed, as Sazonov made clear in his memoirs, Britain had agreed to Russia's expectations with regard to Constantinople and the Straits before the Ottoman Empire had entered the war. 40

The direction of the dynamics within the Entente was already evident by the time the Ottomans made their fateful move. In that context the agreement of March 30 was a mere formality, though it had been somewhat difficult to bring the French around to the idea. The only reason why it took about six months for the Entente powers to formalize what they had already tacitly agreed upon was that Great Britain and France needed time to decide what they would demand for themselves in return. For strategic reasons Britain focused on Alexandretta as a safe port as well as Mesopotamia and Basra, while France chose Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine. The loss of the capital clearly would precipitate the thorough partition of the Ottoman Empire.

The empire had survived until 1914 and still had one foot, albeit a feeble one, in Europe. In World War I it was the only primordial eastern power to take on a group of mighty Western powers, believing that they would be finished off quickly. This was not at all the case. David Lloyd George divulged that much at his speech to the Commons at the end of the war, admitting that the Ottoman Empire's "choice" to enter World War I caused the war to drag on for two more years. He did not, of course, admit how Britain pushed them to the brink, because his purpose was not to flatter but to lay the ideological ground for the Ottomans' oncoming severe punishment. In fact Great Britain was as much revanchist on the Ottoman Empire at Sèvres as France was on Germany at Versailles.

In World War I all of the major belligerents sought to defend and if possible augment their Great Power status. Not a single one of that illustrious group faced an existential threat. In the last analysis, if they did not wish to make war, they could have continued to live, probably some steps down in the hierarchy of Great Powers. Lesser allies on either side were also primarily after aggrandizement of territory. Their petty disputes predated the outbreak of the war. Bulgaria and Serbia could have split Macedonia among themselves in one way or another. If Serbia stopped provoking the Habsburgs, it could have lived with honor enough. In this massive world war the Ottomans were the only ones who were fighting a genuine existential threat. This singularity of Turkish resistance reveals the main context of direct Ottoman involvement in the war.

In the end the Ottoman Empire was defeated by armies with equipment and hardware far superior to their own. Ottoman soldiers had to wear summer uniforms in nightmarishly harsh winter conditions and wear scraps of cloth in Palestine and Syria. Like water eroding the surface of a rock, a chasm came to exist between the East and the West. The Young Turks, the Party of Union and Progress, and others who continued to fight to the very end during the final hours of the Ottoman Empire were unable to surmount that basic, all-encompassing dilemma. Perhaps this should have been apparent enough. In light of what ensued, it might well be said that whatever the attendant consequences of inaction might have been, the Young Turks should have stayed away from a war that was taking place primarily among the industrialized powers. But that is precisely the point. The Young Turks refused to surrender to a fate that was to be forced upon them. Trying to cling to an illusory neutral status would have been an impossibly passive stance, tantamount to waiting for the dreaded day when the final judgment would be handed down. Hearts in hand, they leapt into the darkness.

The Ottomans, like the Habsburgs, the Hohenzollerns, and the Romanovs, had come to the very edge. A grand settling of accounts was impending, as old Europe was coming to a close. No pro-German group had hijacked the Ottoman government in August 1914, just as Germany was not doing everything in its power to win over the Ottoman Empire. However paradoxical it may seem, the Turco-German alliance was the result of British intransigence and Entente politics. The Young Turks had met Perfidious Albion par excellence.

Moments that will be described as "historical" years later arrive suddenly. The geostrategic realities suddenly jump to the forefront. The unspoken but very much present facts of life take hold. Crises build upon concrete, irrefutable realities and demand concrete answers. Leaders who are called on to take action at such historic moments do not usually have much choice. Like taking a first glance at a deck of cards, they are forced to compute in seconds what is bound to happen. Under such circumstances gut feelings count more than anything else. In August 1914 their gut feeling told the Young Turks that tsarist Russia would not miss the opportunity arising in the midst of the great upheaval to settle once and for all the historic question of Constantinople and the Straits. Given the long history of Russo-Turkish wars, this conclusion would have been an easy one for any Ottoman leaders to draw, Young Turk or not. Enver Paşa and the Young Turk leadership had the courage to act—and the rest is history. To be sure, the end of the Ottoman Empire was a painful and tragic process for all its constituent elements and its ancient and time-honored millets. Yet, in this world of intertwined pains, we can ignore only at our peril the many complexities that surround the Young Turks' momentous decision. A multitude of factors rose from the disturbed substrata of dormant considerations. We cannot fail to see the hand of Great Power politics in the shaping of that fateful moment. Simplistic and populist narratives, geared to further present political agendas, cannot teach a lesson of history to the generations of today.

NOTES

- 1. Throughout this chapter I employ the terms "Young Turk" and "Committee of Union and Progress" (CUP) interchangeably, after Feroz Ahmad, who did so in his groundbreaking The Young Turks. Not everyone who once belonged to or rose from the opposition to the Hamidian regime remained a Young Turk. I am not denoting as "Young Turk," especially, Prince Sabahaddin and his followers, who later during the Second Constitutional period came together in the Ahrar Party and subsequently regrouped within the so-called Liberal Entente (Hürriyet ve İtilâf). Indeed lumping the Hamidian era opposition under the same rubric and continuing to employ this terminology for the Second Constitutional period only conceals the antagonism between the two major groups who came together under the leadership of Ahmed Rıza on the one hand and Prince Sabahaddin on the other. Their different worldviews were already evident before the revolution. These were two ideologically separate and distinct political formations. More importantly, while the CUP at least tried to be cognizant of the pressures of realpolitik, Prince Sabahaddin and his followers and Kamil Paşa, the nemesis of the CUP, unwaveringly preferred to remain within the orbit and influence of Great Britain. They were never prone to question the validity of Britain's policies in the Ottoman context and thus ever widened the chasm between themselves and the Young Turks as the fateful year of 1914 approached.
- 2. Michael A. Reynolds, Shattering Empires, 97.

- Many members of the Whig government of the time, including Herbert Henry Asquith and Edward Grey, described themselves as "Liberal Imperialist." Their main argument was that the Liberals should bring themselves closer to the new Imperialist spirit.
- Edward Mead Earle, Ottoman Empire, the Great Powers, and the Baghdad Railway, 235.
- 5. S.A. Cohen, British Policy in Mesopotamia, 99.
- 6. Joseph Heller, British Policy towards the Ottoman Empire, 10.
- The memorandum by Alwyn Parker, the Near Eastern expert at the Foreign Office on the Baghdad Railway, dated January 28, 1910, is explanatory. Great Britain, National Archives (formerly Public Record Office), Foreign Office Papers (hereafter FO) 371/991, (3743), 2.
- 8. Parker's memorandum, 4.
- 9. Ibid., 7. These "damages" refer to the efforts of the Ottoman government to curb the activities of the Lynch Brothers, who were operating a monopoly on river transport on the Euphrates, charging exorbitant prices.
- 10. Ahmad, The Young Turks, 67.
- 11. Lowther to Grey, April 2, 1910, telegram no. 197, FO 371/991, (12167).
- 12. Grey to Lowther, April 18, 1910, telegram no. 96, FO 371/991, (13013).
- 13. Grey to Lowther, April 20, 1910, telegram no. 107, FO 371/991, (11933).
- 14. FO 371/991, (11933).
- 15. It is an irony that the British ambassadors to the Porte were customarily received by Ottoman protocol officers when they arrived in Edirne, on their way to Constantinople.
- 16. Although it may well be meaningful to talk about a Turco-Russian antagonism, it was somewhat muted in this period. Once World War I started and the question of Constantinople and the Straits rose to the fore and exploded in front of the Ottoman decisionmakers, it became clear that the Ottoman Empire was not as important as Russia for the British national interest.
- 17. Heller, British Policy towards the Ottoman Empire, 79.
- 18. Babington-Smith to Hardinge, February 6, 1910, FO 371/991, (5227).
- 19. The 1911 Annual Report of the British Embassy, FO 371/1491, (4966).
- 20. Jennifer Siegel, Endgame, 186, 192.
- 21. The Ottoman government opposed the appointment of a Russian governor general to administer the six vilayets in question. While the British insisted on the appointment of a Russian, which went against the grains of the Young Turks, Germany was helpful in reaching an agreement on finding two officials from non-aligned countries, Norwegian and Dutch.
- 22. The Liman von Sanders crisis has also been taken much out of its context. The appointment of a foreign officer to a position of high command may seem an extreme measure at first glance. The fiasco of the Balkan Wars had made abundantly clear, however, that radical reforms were needed in the Ottoman army. This time the reforms were going to hurt. The government could not risk entrenched interests putting a brake on reforms. The survival of the far-flung empire, which has just ended in the Balkans, was more than ever dependent on the success of reform. The Ottoman Empire's poverty and many weaknesses were apparent, and this

was no time for business as usual. It was evident enough that partial or slipshod measures would have no chance to bring about the transformation required if the Ottoman Empire was to survive. Hence the logic behind the Liman von Sanders appointment. In fact the Unionist government wanted to pursue a far-reaching reform program in the bureaucracy. British officials would be responsible for refom in the navy and at the ministries of finance and justice; the French in the gendarmerie. As such, Liman von Sanders did not personalize the much talked about "German influence."

- 23. Interestingly, Russia had prepared to intervene in order to avoid the expected entry of Bulgarian forces into Constantinople during the First Balkan War. More or less the same consideration delayed Greece's joining the war on the side of the Entente.
- 24. FO 371/1847/55115. The note by Eyre Crowe, head of the Eastern Department and a friend of the Russian Entente, on the telegram from Hugh O'Beirne, chargé d'affaires at St. Petersburg dated December 7, 1913, shows the extent of the then ongoing concern that Russia could at any time commence operations against eastern Anatolia. Another note by Crowe disclosing the same concern is written on the telegram from Buchanan to Grey, dated December 19, 1913. See *British Documents on the Origins of the War, 1898–1914*, ed. G. P. Gooch and Harold Temperley, 10:i:390–91.
- 25. The particular arrangement in question specified that the channel would be defended by Britain, thereby enabling the French navy to concentrate in the Mediterranean, which would soon prove to be the tipping factor in the British decision to go to war on August 4. Of course the strengthened French presence in the Mediterranean was quite problematical for German planning, which helped Britain. But the most powerful argument that Paul Cambon brought in front of Grey to persuade the British cabinet to enter the war was precisely this arrangement, which could only be described as a military alliance. Therefore Cambon was able to argue that the British were under a moral obligation to protect France. While Britain did not go to war to protect France or Russia but to avoid the emergence of a Continent under German hegemony, the question of moral obligation and Germany's roughshod treatment of Belgian neutrality made it much easier to defend the British decision to go to war.
- 26. Buchanan to Grey, April 3, 1914; *British Documents*, 10:ii:785. See also the note of Grey on the telegram from Buchanan on April 14, 1914, *British Documents*, 10:ii:783.
- Nicolas de Basily, The Abdication of Emperor Nicholas II of Russia, appendix 1, "On Our Goals in Regard to the Straits."
- 28. Tens of thousands of Ottoman citizens had contributed to the campaign to raise the funds for the construction of these battleships. Officers gave up a month's salary, women sold their rings, and so forth. After the news of the seizure spread, the British Embassy in Constantinople was besieged with protests, expressing tremendous outrage. Still, the language used was not excessive. One retired civil servant sent half of his salary in an envelope and protested the seizure of the ships: "May these pennies help save Great Britain, since it has become so desperate as to stoop to theft": Andrew Ryan, *The Last of the Dragomans* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1951), 95.

- Grey was surprised to learn of the position of Admiral Limpus. Apparently he did not know that the Ottoman fleet was commanded by a British admiral.
- 30. Note by Eyre Crowe dated December 24, 1913, on the telegram from Mallet to Grey dated December 12, 1913, FO 371/1998/27926.
- 31. William Peter Kaldis, "Background for Conflict," FO, D 1142.
- 32. See "The Balkans, 1914–1915: From the Outbreak of the War to the Offer to Bulgaria," July 9, 1915, FO 371/2264.
- 33. Heller, British Policy towards the Ottoman Empire, 69.
- 34. Geoff Berridge, Gerald Fitzmaurice (1865–1939), 211.
- 35. This campaign achieved a full travesty of the facts. Enver Paşa always carried a small Qur'an, which the Bolsheviks who killed him in the Pamirs found in his pocket near his heart. He also did not shrink from fighting the Germans in the Caucasus toward the end of the war. He sent Turkish troops to Galicia not to fulfill Germany's wishes but because he knew full well that the western theater would be decisive in the conclusion of the war. If Germany went under, Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire would have to follow. This was precisely what took place in the latter half of 1918.
- 36. The recent work of Edward J. Erickson sheds valuable light on the Ottoman national security context. See "The Armenian Relocations and Ottoman National Security," 291–98. See also his book Ordered to Die.
- 37. Michael A. Reynolds, "Buffers, Not Brethren," 137-79.
- 38. This hinterland included a huge area starting from the Sakarya River to the border of Bulgaria, including Edirne and the islands in the Marmara Sea and the southern shores of the Marmara.
- 39. Basily, *The Abdication of Emperor Nicholas II of Russia*, appendix 1: "On Our Goals in Regard to the Straits," 173.
- 40. Serge Sazonov, Fateful Years, 252.

The Black Sea Raid of October 29, 1914, as a Foreign Policy Decision

Collusion or Necessity?

Gün Kut

War is like that: in the case of victory, every action taken is admired; while in the case of defeat, the same actions are considered craziness or a frenzy of madness.

— Ali İhsan (Sabis) Paşa

INTRODUCTION

The reasons behind the Ottoman Empire's entry into World War I and the manner in which it opened hostilities have always been highly controversial. The historical judgments regarding this matter have in great measure completed their process of evolution, although resulting in a certain polarization. On the whole these judgments share a common ground in holding the leaders of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) responsible for the empire's entry into World War I and its defeat: an axiomatic assertion that continues to hold sway today. Thus two complementary theses have become widely held truths and a part of the collective memory: according to the first, the Germans deceived the Turks; according to the second, Enver Paşa was a willing accomplice in this German intrigue.²

Based upon these intrigue-complicity theses, the following cliché scenario emerges. At the moment when the Bosnia crisis appeared to be on the verge of enveloping all of Europe in August 1914, the CUP government was split into rival camps: one pro-British, the other pro-German. Those belonging to the pro-British camp hoped that by remaining neutral during the prospective war they would guarantee the territorial

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integrity of the Ottoman Empire through the political support of Britain. Pro-German members hoped that through the military support of Germany they would not only guarantee territorial integrity but would also have the opportunity to regain at least part of the lands that had been lost since 1878. The Germans took advantage of this indecisiveness by organizing a fait accompli involving a naval raid on Russian Black Sea targets, to be carried out by Admiral Wilhelm Souchon, commander of the *Goeben*. In his capacity as minister of war Enver Paşa approved this fait accompli without informing even the pro-German members of the cabinet. The Black Sea raid of October 29, 1914, provoked Russia and its allies to declare war. Germany got what it wanted, as a new eastern front had been opened. Notwithstanding all the efforts of the Ottoman Empire, it not only lost the war (which it had to fight along four simultaneous fronts) but was also eventually forced to sign an extremely onerous peace treaty, which spelled its demise.

Even though this scenario appears correct in terms of its general outline, it has some defects. First, in terms of international politics, it mirrors the overriding tendency to attribute all responsibility for World War I to the losing side. In terms of domestic politics, it has become an inseparable element of the threefold settling of accounts by CUP supporters (İttihatçı), Freedom and Accord Party supporters (Itilafçı), and Kemalists.³ This struggle occurred during the five to eight years after the war and the foundation of the Turkish Republic. On the one hand, this scenario conveniently served the purpose of supporting certain positions within domestic politics. On the other, however, it led to the uncritical assumption that the Ottoman foreign policy decision makers were either naïve or acting in bad faith and in either case were passive actors in regard to the deceptions or impositions of external factors. Both local and foreign analyses of the time basically agree that the "Germans," with a colluding Enver Paşa, deceived the "Turks." This statement, intended to discredit the CUP, lays bare the ambivalent relationship between the Republic and the Ottomans, which can be summarized as follows: the Ottoman Empire's collapse was inevitable, but those who made it happen were nontheless guilty of wrongdoing.

THE BACKGROUND OF FOREIGN POLICY DECISIONS

Even if the domestic political situation was far from satisfying certain expectations and was highly criticized on various fronts,⁴ the Ottoman Empire was nevertheless a European state that reflected many characteristics of its time and in certain respects was even more advanced than some of

its counterparts. It was a constitutional monarchy. It had a two-chamber parliament and a cabinet system of government. Even if they were not organized in the real sense of the word, government and opposition groups in many ways exhibited the characteristics of multiparty politics. Political activity was lively. By contemporary standards the empire even had a certain degree of freedom of the press after the abolishment of censorship in 1908. The legislative, executive, and judiciary branches functioned normally, without any sign of a state on the verge of demise. Notwithstanding all the problems, the empire had also a long administrative tradition, a vast and experienced bureaucracy, and considerable diplomatic expertise. Given this infrastructure, it is fair to assume that during the Second Constitutional period government decisions were taken in a rational way, by taking a problem-solving approach, actively using all available means to achieve defined ends in a manner that would not be counter to the principles of guaranteeing the survival of the state and protecting its subjects. A natural corollary would be that the decisions made should be in harmony with the policies followed.

Of course all this did not mean that the success of these policies in practice was guaranteed. Even if policies aiming toward a certain objective were planned and executed in a perfectly competent manner, they still might not deliver the expected outcomes (for reasons separately analyzed below) or might even result in outright failure. Such a situation, however, should not lead us to the conclusion that the decision-making process had not been carried out according to rational principles. In other words, rational decision-making processes and correct policies, despite being rational and correct, may result in failure, a situation that is not uncommon in state administration.

Furthermore, the assumption that decision makers normally behave rationally should not lead us to rationalize their every act. It is generally impossible to know the methods of reasoning or the real intentions and expectations of actors who can be observed only from the outside. In this case the method most commonly employed in order to understand the decision makers is to put ourselves in their place, taking all external factors into consideration and making assumptions about their intentions and expectations.⁵ Even though this "empathy" gives an approximate idea to observers, without complete information related to a certain matter the causality chain will have gaps. These will then have to be filled up with new assumptions: the less information available, the more speculation required. Hence the trap. Striving for maximum explanation using minimum information on the basis of the rationality assumption ultimately leads to the generation of conspiracy theories. At times conspiracy

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theories might assume a misleadingly reasonable appearance, but their connection to reality will be weak to say the least. Certain narratives about how the Ottomans entered the war (some of which became very popular) fall within this category.

It is acceptable to assume that decision makers will try to solve the problems they face as rational actors by exhibiting behavior that will remain predictable within certain limits (except for personal nuances and differences in style), notwithstanding the dangers mentioned above. The influence of differences in personality is naturally a factor to be taken into consideration, but we also have to be realistic about the limits of individual actors' capacity to determine events.

OTTOMAN DECISION MAKERS AS "RATIONAL ACTORS"

Within the framework of these principles, we can consider just how and why the decision about the October 29, 1914, Black Sea raid that led the Ottoman Empire to enter the war was made. Many pieces of information that had been explicitly or implicitly made available by the responsible actors themselves for years were sacrificed to prejudices deriving from the observers' political attitudes or points of view, which attributed certain intentions to particular actors. For example, we know that before the war the CUP leaders made a series of attempts to build alliances with Britain, France, and even Russia, their main adversary.⁶ The aim was to have these states guarantee Ottoman territorial integrity in exchange for an alliance. For a state that had continuously been losing territories since 1878, such efforts should not come as a surprise. For an administration able to read the signals of the policies of the Düvel-i Muazzama (Great Powers) correctly, however, it should not be regarded as coincidence that each attempt met with an unfavorable response. An arrangement that guaranteed Ottoman territorial integrity and made room for the possibility of the empire regaining after the war some of the land that it had recently lost, especially in the Balkans, was opposed not only by Russia but also by Britain and France. This situation was not to be taken lightly by any Ottoman administration.⁷

The war was ignited when Serbian requests and expectations concerning former Ottoman Bosnia and Herzegovina (which had been annexed by Austria in 1908) turned violent. The Ottoman government had suffered within a few years the greatest losses of territory in Ottoman history, including Bosnia and Herzegovina and Bulgaria, compounded by

further losses incurred during the Libyan War and Balkan Wars. Thus for the Ottomans becoming part of the British-French-Russian alliance that was gradually taking on official status would have meant killing two birds with one stone. First, being part of the coalition against Austria and Italy would mean reckoning with those states, while taking part in Serbia's defense was cause for expectation that the Serbs might renounce some of the territory gained in the Balkan Wars. Second, by fighting on the same side as Russia, the overt Russian threat toward Istanbul and the Straits would at least be postponed to an indeterminate future. In the meantime an opportunity might present itself to recuperate the Aegean islands recently occupied by Greece. Russia's categorical opposition to any arrangement favorable to these aims could only be interpreted in one way: the Ottoman state was under open threat in all of these regards.

As for Britain and France, the choice between Russia (whose support was most needed against Germany, Austria, and Italy—at the time still an ally) and the Ottomans (who had been sorely defeated during the Balkan Wars, after which they had purged the upper ranks of their army) was obvious. This being the case, it is hardly logical to blame Britain and France for not accepting an alliance with the CUP government.8 In its assessment of the situation and the decision to establish an alliance with the Ottomans, Germany underwent similar processes. In the beginning the idea of forging an alliance with the Ottomans met with well-argued resistance. Without a direct intervention by the emperor it would have been impossible for both military and civilian German decision makers to accept the idea of supporting Ottomans against Russia.9

Russia too appears to have been coherent in its policies. An alliance inclusive of the Ottomans would have meant guaranteeing the existence of the Ottoman state, the collapse of which it had long been expecting.¹⁰ For this reason Russian political cadres were almost wishing for the Ottomans to take part on the opposing side.¹¹ From the perspective of the Ottomans, who must have been aware of this situation, the credibility of a Russian guarantee of territorial integrity in exchange for a promise of Ottoman neutrality in war was suspect. The Ottomans were unaware of certain considerations, plans, and negotiations, the existence of which would only be documented much later.¹² So they had to make certain predictions on the basis of their diplomatic instincts and guesses. Russia rebuked the Ottoman government's compromising stance and refused its offer of indemnity after the Black Sea raid instead of immediately opting for war. This made the tsar's priorities clear and also led the CUP leaders to conclude that they had not been mistaken. Perhaps much more

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difficult to understand from the point of view of the Ottoman decision makers was Britain's attitude following the raid.

Under these circumstances efforts to forge an alliance with Germany were only rational from the point of view of the Ottoman government. All the actors who directly or indirectly took part in this decision agreed on this point and openly stated so, both at the time and later. The situation at hand was a crisis concerning the future of territories that until very recently had belonged to the Ottomans, and Russia was a part of this crisis. The Ottomans were in direct contact with the main actors from both the West and the East and were suspicious of their intentions. According to the very definition of a crisis, decision makers (guided by only a limited amount of information) had to act swiftly or otherwise face enormous risks and costs. The gradual weakening of the Unionists' faith in their ability to keep the Ottoman Empire out of the crisis is clearly apparent. The following question certainly must have occurred to experienced Ottoman leaders and military authorities: "If it is inevitable that the war will spread into Ottoman lands, then under what conditions will it be most advantageous for us to enter the war?" The answer that gradually took shape was that—even if entry into war was inevitable—the best thing to do would be to delay it for as long as possible. Underlying this attitude may have been in part a wish to enter war at the moment when Russia was at its weakest and would therefore incur maximum damage. This in turn, however, could have meant that postponing the problem and relying on reactive measures to save the day instead of attempting actively to influence developments would risk suffering the consequences of events that ultimately would be shaped by the decisions of others. The way to escape this impasse was to take the initiative and decide as soon as possible on the timing, conditions, and manner of entering the war.

The options available to the Ottoman decision makers, assuming that they were rational actors, are obvious. Either be satisfied with the territorial integrity promised begrudgingly by France, Britain, and Russia only for the duration of the war in the form of a mere declaration instead of a treaty and therefore remain neutral or undertake an active role to secure more reliable guarantees and thus ensure the least devastating of possible scenarios. The Ottomans chose the latter option, and the actors concerned defended this decision at every possible opportunity. This being the case, we might conclude that every rational actor assessing the existing situation objectively would have made the same decision. If we are to see this conclusion as anything more than an abstract generalization, however, we must take a look at the way the decision makers actually acted and how they legitimized their own decisions.

THE ACTORS BEHIND THE DECISION TO OPEN HOSTILITIES

Individuals making up the executive power (in other words, members of the cabinet and functionaries of the administrative units reporting to it) generally are the actors who take part in the decision-making process within the framework of the roles attributed to them by the constitution and the law. They are the ones most strongly influenced by political dynamics, who in turn influence those same dynamics. We can assume that the members of this group (consisting of political leaders and of highlevel state functionaries) were in constant communication with each other and expressed their views within the framework of their duties according to their professional, institutional, or personal preferences. The parts they played in the decision-making process presumably were in proportion to their respective powers. It is to be expected that the decision made at the end of such a process will probably be far from reflecting all the preferences of each actor. It will instead be a composite resulting from collective power sharing, bargaining, and compromise. The more complex the process is, the greater the probability that errors and deficiencies will occur, notwithstanding the intricacies of personal rivalries.

In order to analyze the decision to carry out the Black Sea raid according to these basic rules, we first need to identify the primary groups of actors influencing the decision-making process. This decision would very likely end in war, and contemporary sources clearly show that two other groups must be included in the equation in addition to the government, which bore primary responsibility: the Ottoman General Staff and the political and military representatives of the empire's allies, German and Austro-Hungarian officials in Ottoman lands. We can envision the members of these groups as belonging to a series of concentric rings. Some belonged to more than one ring at the same time and thus emerged as critical actors, with Enver Paşa, ever present in every ring, the most critical actor of all.

Two important characteristics should be underlined when considering the situation of the Ottoman government at that time: the sultan's position and the relationship between the government and the ruling political party. Sultan Mehmed Reşad seems to have remained completely passive when it came to any political decisions, in part by choice and in part out of helplessness. He was surprised to read in the newspapers that Enver Paşa had become minister of war, which sufficiently illustrates the extent of the situation. While the sultan was completely different from the German emperor in this respect, his status, interestingly enough, was

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similar to that of the king of England. The same similarities also hold true in the case of the respective governments. Wilhelm II of Germany held overwhelming sway in the decision-making process. The government never played a role much beyond that of enforcer. In the United Kingdom, in contrast, a small group within the government known as the "war cabinet" made all the critical decisions. The other members of the cabinet and parliament were all but excluded from the decision-making process, almost to the same degree as their counterparts in the Ottoman Empire.¹³

The relationship between the CUP and the government was effectively just as it would be in the case of a single-party system. Decisions to be made by the government were first discussed in the party's parallel structures, usually before entering the agenda of the cabinet. As a result, while some cabinet members were excluded from the process, some members of the party who were not ministers nevertheless played influential roles in it. Within this framework the main cabinet and party members in the first and second rings of decision making consisted of five cabinet members: grand vezir Said Halim Paşa, the CUP triumvirate of Enver Paşa, Cemal Paşa, and Talat Paşa, and minister of finance Cavid Bey, complemented by Speaker of the parliament Halil (Menteşe), together with Behaettin Şakir and Mithat Şükrü (Bleda) from the party headquarters.

The third ring of decision makers consisted of the War Ministry and the General Staff (Erkan-1 Harbiye). We once more find Enver Paşa as both minister of war and chief of the General Staff. Other members of the circle were ministry undersecretary Mahmud Kamil Paşa, vice chief of the General Staff and later chief of the General Staff Fritz Bronsart von Schellendorf, second chief of the General Staff Hafiz Hakkı Paşa, director of operations of the General Staff Ali İhsan (Sabis) Paşa, director of intelligence of the General Staff Kazım (Karabekir) Paşa, and all German officers (who in practice managed the directorates of the Ottoman War Ministry). They witnessed all stages of the preparations for entering war except for the ordering of the Black Sea raid and played their specific roles within the decision-making process.

The fourth ring consisted of allied diplomats and officers who were highly influential in political and military decisions and able to exercise tremendous pressure on other actors to achieve their goals. These included German ambassador Hans Freiherr von Wangenheim, Austro-Hungarian ambassador Johann von Pallavicini, German military aid commission chief Otto Liman von Sanders, commander of the German

Mediterranean fleet and later of the Ottoman fleet Wilhelm Souchon, chief of the operations directorate Friedrich Freiherr Kress von Kressenstein, Austro-Hungarian military attaché Joseph Pomiankowski, and commander of the German Embassy yacht Lorelei and childhood friend of Enver Paşa Hans Humann.¹⁴ The Ottoman ambassador to Berlin, Mahmud Muhtar Paşa, could also have taken part in these circles, but he claims to have argued for an anti-German position and as a result was excluded from the negotiations.¹⁵

Most of these personalities' own accounts of their actions and the reasons behind them are accessible via published memoirs and other documents. Apart from Enver Paşa, all central actors and the majority of those in the third and fourth rings who wielded influence in the decision to carry out the Black Sea raid or who were expected to have taken part in it have written their memoirs. Obviously these memoirs must be evaluated in light of the fact that they were written after a war that had been lost. It would be better to begin, however, by giving ear to those actors themselves and listening to the reasons they give for having made certain decisions, rather than ascribing particular intentions to them. It is of course also possible to check the accuracy of many of their subjective statements and accounts by comparing them with documentation about the war that has since become available.

Narratives about the three consecutive decisions that paved the way to war—to sign the Alliance Treaty with Germany on August 2, to grant permission for the German warships Goeben and Breslau to enter the Dardanelles on August 10 and authorize their purchase by the Ottoman government, and finally to carry out the Black Sea raid on October 29 sometimes contradict each other. But comments on the aims of those decisions made as rational actors exhibit similarities. The actors had heated discussions among themselves, but it is apparent that the discussions and reported disagreements in question concerned not ultimate objectives but rather the best methods to achieve those objectives. 16

There is no first-person narrative about World War I by Enver Paşa, who was the chief member of the CUP triumvirate. But all other actors describe Enver Paşa's position in similar ways in their own narratives: he first wanted the Alliance Treaty; he granted permission for the German warships to pass; and he finally decided on the timing of the Black Sea raid. Talat Paşa, who was first minister of the interior and later grand vezir, joined Enver in believing in the necessity of an alliance with Germany as a protection from the Russian threat. He therefore thought it necessary to enter the war but was in favor of postponing entry for as 122 GÜN KUT

long as possible. Talat professed not to have known anything about the Black Sea raid beforehand but claimed that nobody had opposed it.¹⁷

Cemal Paşa, the minister of the navy, also believed that an alliance was the only viable solution. He too was of the opinion that entrance into the war was inevitable but had to be postponed for as long as possible. It was also inevitable that the German warships would pass, so the formula of the Ottoman government purchasing them in order to conform to the letter of neutrality at the time was a favorable solution. Thanks to this episode, a connection had been established with the long-sought abolition of the Capitulations—an objective shared by all members of the cabinet and duly achieved.¹⁸

All three members of the triumvirate agreed that establishing naval supremacy over Russia in the Black Sea was essential, and that is why the raid had to be carried out. By that time the options concerning the timing of the operation were reduced to two: entering the war immediately or in six months, in the spring. Cemal Paşa insinuates that he would have approved the raid if he had been asked, although he had not been notified about it.¹⁹

Said Halim Paşa, who was both prime minister and minister of foreign affairs at the same time but not a party member, supported an alliance with Germany. He was opposed neither to the passage of the warships nor to the purchase formula. He was aware that sooner or later they would have to decide when and how to enter the war, but his personal preference was to remain nonbelligerent allies if possible. But he was confronted with the fait accompli of the Black Sea raid and understandably offended at having been excluded from the decision to carry out the operation—as both prime minister and minister of foreign affairs of the empire, he naturally would have expected to have been included. Said Halim Paşa initially reacted by trying to resign but was then convinced not to do so. It is clear both in his statements during the questioning of wartime officials and in his memoir that he was disappointed not by what had happened but rather by the way it had happened.²⁰ He finally approved of the steps taken, although he would have preferred to play for time indefinitely.

Halil (Menteşe) Bey, who was Speaker of parliament and later minister of foreign affairs, fully supported the Alliance Treaty. He took part in the negotiations for the purchase of the warships and concluded that domination of the Black Sea had been attained. Nevertheless, he believed that entry into war should be postponed and considered it an accident that the Black Sea raid had been carried out without a formal government

decree.²¹ Mithat Şükrü agreed that the alliance was necessary but claimed that he thought it might have been possible to stay out of the war; Enver Paşa had rushed into it.²² If Mithat Şükrü was truly sincere in this view, then he must have been a minority within the Unionists and more in line with Said Halim Paşa in this regard.

Contrary to the others in this group, minister of finance Cavid Bey, a very important figure within both the party and the cabinet and the satisfied architect of the abolition of the Capitulations, was the only one who believed it possible to remain completely outside the war and that joining it would be a mistake.²³ In keeping with this stance he resigned from the cabinet together with minister of the postal and telegraphic service Oskan Efendi and minister of agriculture and trade Süleyman Elbustani, who had both declared that they were opposed to the war on principle. Minister of public works Çürüksulu Mahmut Paşa joined them, stating that he could not shoulder the responsibility for something carried out without the consent of the cabinet. Unlike Said Halim Paşa, Cavid Bey refused to withdraw his resignation despite pleas from other members of the government.

Kazım (Karabekir) Paşa, who at the time was director of intelligence of the General Staff, stated that in this capacity he was in favor of putting an end to Russian domination of the Black Sea. He said that he was not aware of the Alliance Treaty but that he would have supported it if they had asked for his view. Even though he was in favor of maintaining a position of armed neutrality, he was also aware that entry into the war was inevitable and might even be necessary. Because he did not approve of an immediate Black Sea raid, he had tried to get it postponed for tactical reasons for at least six months. According to his own statement, together with other officers of the general staff he had thrice tried to convince Enver that he should postpone the operation but on the third occasion had failed.²⁴

Ali İhsan (Sabis) Paşa, director of operations of the General Staff, had actually made it clear that he did not consider continuation of neutrality to be a viable option when he stated that it was necessary to play for time in order to enter the war at a time of their own choice and that Russia was to be considered the primary antagonist. He was worried that the Russians might land on the shores of the Bosphorus if the Ottomans failed to gain the upper hand in the Black Sea. But he was of the opinion that Enver Paşa was making a mistake by trusting the Germans too much. Meanwhile Ali İhsan Paşa's greatest worry concerned the timing of the operation. In early September 1914 Enver Paşa accepted the General

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Staff's proposal, according to which the war would commence once full control of the Black Sea had been achieved and direct contact with Germany had been established via Bulgaria. Apart from this, especially during late September, Ali İhsan Paşa's directorate was in the midst of "full preparations for war."²⁵

The group of dignitaries consisting of diplomats and officers was more varied, with various sources of internal tension.²⁶ Liman von Sanders did not get along with either Enver Pasa or Bronsart Pasa.²⁷ Kress von Kressenstein wrote of all the efforts that he had made to achieve a consensus amongst the three.²⁸ Liman Paşa wanted the Ottomans to enter the war immediately but could not agree upon the place and time of the operation and in the end was not notified about the decision to have the fleet proceed to the Black Sea.²⁹ Pomiankowski observed that disagreements existed on the one hand between Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire and on the other between the German Embassy and the German Military Mission.³⁰ But in this case too the subject of contention was the nature and timing of the initial operation. Even though Wangenheim and Pallavicini were in favor of delaying entry into war until the completion of mobilization and the opening of the route through Bulgaria, 31 the Austro-Hungarian side preferred to keep the Straits closed and maintain neutrality. Within this framework it is not surprising that Pomiankowski should have been in agreement with the view that Enver Paşa, Cemal Paşa, and Talat Paşa were under German influence and were leading the country into a catastrophe. 32 It should be kept in mind, however, that all these discussions and disagreements basically concerned the questions of the best time to enter the war and how to begin hostilities.

In conclusion, the following picture emerges when we consider the preferences and positions of the actors who took part in the decision-making process together with the events quickly unfolding within the daily crises of World War I. Ottoman decision makers were aware that sustaining a policy of armed neutrality to the end of the war was not a realistic option. Even if this had been possible, not having entered the war would not have been enough to guarantee the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire in the case of an Entente victory. It had been difficult for German decision makers to warm to the idea of an alliance with the Ottomans, however, resulting in a poorly prepared final agreement that had been rushed through at the last moment. The Ottomans considered the German alliance to be a success, given their initial optimistic expectation that it would at the very least suffice to deter perceived Russian

designs and perhaps also induce the Greeks to evacuate the Aegean islands. But the war had already begun for Germany before the CUP government even had the time and opportunity to enjoy the expected benefits of the treaty of alliance. This new situation made it necessary for the empire immediately to undertake preparations for a possible war against Russia.³³ As discussed below, discussion during the second half of September 1914 revolved around not whether or not the Ottomans would enter the war but about when and how they would do so.³⁴

THE DECISION

When considering the process that culminated in the decision to carry out the Black Sea raid, we must keep in mind that the agreement signed with Germany on August 2 was a military alliance against a Russian attack. A cursory look at the military operations planned after the declaration of mobilization shows that almost all of them had been prepared against Russia.³⁵ Realizing that Germany expected the Ottoman Empire to join the war as soon as the hostilities started, however, and not only against Russia, the Ottoman government immediately began employing delaying tactics. With a few exceptions everybody in the decision-making rings was aware that the alliance agreements meant that they would have to fight in support of Germany in case of war, which looked inevitable as things stood. But the widely held assumption that the war would not last long and would ultimately end in victory for Germany probably gave rise to the hope that entry into the war could be delayed. Once everything had ended, the advantages of having sided with the victor could be rightfully enjoyed. This tactic, however, which might have been sustainable politically,³⁶ lagged behind developments in the military theater.

Once military preparations were largely completed (and it had been declared that the *Goeben* and *Breslau* would be flying Ottoman colors) a preemptive naval strike that would provide superiority against the Russian fleet in the Black Sea must have been perceived as a possible but not probable way to allow the Ottomans to eliminate the Russian danger without necessarily having to engage in war. The attitude of the grand vezir Said Halim after the raid, offering formal apology and compensation, may be read as an indication of this.³⁷ Given the general military situation in October 1914, it actually would not have been very strange if Russia had accepted Said Halim Paşa's offers. But the tsar's government responded to the Black Sea raid in an almost celebratory manner, and

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the British began their first operation against the Ottomans without the military engagement even of Russia. This shows that such an expectation was not very realistic.

In sum, the decision to enter the war at some point was made with the signing of the August 2 alliance agreement with Germany. After the *Goeben* and *Breslau* incident on August 6–11 postponing entry into the war had gradually become more and more difficult, with viable delay tactics becoming fewer and fewer. When the British announced on September 27 that they would prevent Ottoman warships from leaving the Dardanelles, the Ottoman War Ministry ordered the final mining of the Straits, effectively closing it to sea traffic. It may be assumed that war between the Ottoman Empire and the Entente had unofficially begun at that very moment. It would be naïve to think that an act that severed the connection between Russia and its allies could be carried out without leading to war.

Thus it can be argued that both the CUP government and the General Staff, far from having been deceived, had made a conscious choice that was rational and realistic under the circumstances. The subsequent military necessities made a preemptive strike in the Black Sea inevitable. The Ottoman General Staff, together with the German officials, had already planned the strike in detail and considered various possible scenarios. In the end an operation plan approved by all military decision makers was produced. Next came discussions concerning the timing of the plan's implementation. In other words, the decision to enter war had been made. Even the place and nature of the first operation had been determined, so that the only thing left to discuss was the timing. Careful observers will notice that many of the postwar discussions also were concerned with the appropriateness of the timing. What Enver Paşa was accused of having done under heavy pressure from the German allies and without consulting anyone else in fact amounts to nothing other than making the final decision about timing. In all fairness, given that he was both minister of war and chief of the General Staff, as well as acting commander in chief, it should not be too surprising that he considered himself authorized to decide on the tactical timing of a preemptive strike. Ali İhsan (Sabis) Paşa, filling in the blanks, summarized the last stages of the decision for the raid:

[T]he matter of entering war by means of an incident that was supposed to occur on the Black Sea was first discussed by Enver Paşa, the German ambassador, and Admiral Souchon. Later,

following pressure by the German General Staff, the related decision was made on October 20, 1914, by Enver Paşa and Liman and Bronsart Paşas and this decision was later communicated to Talat Bey; meanwhile, as minister of the navy, Cemal Paşa was forced to take part in this decision, and finally it was decided that Halil Bey should be convinced or at least informed of the decision. Hafiz Hakkı had been sent to Berlin with Bronsart so that he should not blab anything out; it was decided and planned that Halil Bey should go with them or follow them so as to string along the grand vezir.³⁸

On October 28 Admiral Souchon, as commander of the Ottoman navy, sailed to the Black Sea to take the step that everybody was expecting, but the timing of which nobody could precisely foresee.³⁹ An operation on the next day can hardly be deemed successful as far as the attainment of military aims was concerned but nevertheless enabled the Ottoman navy to keep Russia's Black Sea fleet away from the Bosphorus throughout the war. Souchon then returned, having accomplished his political aim. After the Russian declaration of war on November 2 and the British and the French declaration on November 5, the Ottoman Empire followed suit on November 11, officially declaring war with a decision of the Council of Ministers and the sultan's decree.⁴⁰

CONCLUSION

Within the framework of a foreign-policy process that was carried out in great part on the basis of the codes of conduct of nineteenth-century diplomacy, it is not realistic to expect that the decision to enter war should first be discussed and duly approved by the cabinet and then processed by parliament and the senate. Under the circumstances it is natural that the decision should be made by a small group basically equivalent to a war cabinet. This is precisely how the decision to sign the German alliance agreement was made by the Ottoman government. As far as the Ottoman decision makers are concerned, the Black Sea raid was the logical and inevitable result of all the political and military developments that came in the wake of this agreement. It was Enver Paşa who decided the date of the raid, however, believing that he could not delay Wangenheim and Souchon any further, and probably informed the other Unionist chiefs at the last moment. Because of this Enver Paşa has always been and always will be considered responsible in the eyes of history. The article

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of the constitution introduced after the declaration of the Republic that made it necessary to get legislative approval for declarations of war is a result of this interpretation of the events. ⁴¹ But equating the responsibility to decide the timing of a preemptive strike with responsibility for leading a state into a war that was subsequently lost must have an ideological connotation.

It is clear from the statements of the other contemporary actors that Enver Paşa would have succeeded if he had chosen to turn the Black Sea raid into an official decision instead of trying to claim all the glory of a "victory against Russia" for himself and would not have been personally held responsible afterward. The real trouble and reaction of those critical of Enver Paşa derived from their having been excluded from the process; otherwise the justifications underlying the decision itself are considered to have been correct. İsmet (İnönü) Paşa, a director at the General Staff headquarters, had been appointed to another position just before the fateful events. In his memoirs he states on the one hand that he had opposed the idea of entering the war on the side of Germany since the very beginning and on the other hand says: "The army had exercised and been organized in the best way imaginable for combat. We had an army that was much stronger and better prepared than it had been for any Russian expedition in the past." Thus he too perceived the entrance into war as a campaign against Russia.

Moreover, almost no one expressed regret at having entered the war at the time. The Black Sea raid had served its limited purpose as a preemptive strike against Russia: naval domination of the Black Sea had been obtained. Contrary to what happened on the Dardanelles front, no attack had occurred from the north to the Bosphorus, the gate of the Ottoman capital. Even though having entered the war before the Bulgarian position became clear was not in accordance with Ottoman plans, events developing at a dizzying speed naturally enough led to sudden changes in the way in which policies were implemented. In retrospect, considering that Bulgaria entered the war on the side of the Alliance, a risk that did not materialize was taken during this intermediate period.

The operation that the Ottoman government initiated within limits determined by the government itself could have resulted in the elimination of the Russian threat before it turned into a fully fledged war, though the likelihood of that happening was slim. Indeed, the turn of events proved otherwise. Yet the war in the form that the government undertook it, as the last Ottoman–Russian war in history, ended in an Ottoman victory. The Brest-Litovsk Treaty signed on March 3, 1918, was

signed by Russia as a vanquished state, while the Ottomans and its allies signed as victors. There is no answer to the question of whether this result could have been obtained without the Black Sea raid. The abolition of the Capitulations, German guarantees concerning the border along the Caucasus region and future war reparations, and promises of support concerning the Aegean islands were already important gains. The issues of Capitulations and the recuperation of Caucasian territorries, which were foremost on the list of concerns, eventually were resolved in accordance with Ottoman demands.

In the days leading up to the Brest-Litovsk Treaty negotiations, Nesimi Bey, who succeeded Halil (Menteşe) Bey as foreign minister, informed the parliament about the Bolshevik government's request for a peace treaty in the rightful tone of a representative of a victorious state. The Ottoman state had to enter the war to ensure its existence, independence, and sovereignty, but in the end it not only attained its legitimate aims but also greatly served the shared aims of its allies. There would not be any obstacle to peace so long as the present Russian government rejected the aggressive policies of the former government of the tsar. When the matter came up for debate in the senate, it was met with the same tone of victory. Even the sworn enemy of the CUP, Damat Ferit Paşa, described the situation as "a divine favor, for which no thanks would be enough."

In his opening speech of the parliament, which had met once again on the eve of the Mudros Armistice sealing the fate of the empire in 1918, Halil (Menteşe) Bey claimed that their interlocutor would have been the "dictatorial and cruel" tsar of Russia, who by then would have been settled in Istanbul if they had not entered the war. According to Halil Bey, the Ottoman army in this war had continued a struggle with the "Moskof" (an Ottoman pejorative term for Russia) that it had begun two and a half centuries earlier and had put an end to the matter once and for all, "by saving not just its own country but also Europe from the domination of the dictatorial tsar."

A considerable number of studies concerning the Ottoman entry into war reach the conclusion that this decision was not necessarily the result of a trick or of treachery but grew out of the government's evaluation of its own circumstances and interests. Ulrich Trumpener, Feroz Ahmad, F. A. K. Yasamee, Mustafa Aksakal, and Michael Reynolds elaborate with great mastery on this thesis of a "rational choice," from various angles. ⁴⁶ Sean McMeekin underlines the inevitability of the war, given Russian policy priorities. ⁴⁷ Michael Reynolds points to the "calculated risk" aspect of the Ottoman decision. ⁴⁸ But these analyses do not reach the

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conclusion that the decisions to enter war and begin the hostilities with the Black Sea raid were not wrong. Carl Mühlmann, one of the important actors of the German mission, in his book published after the war preferred to make a sound and detailed analysis of the situation, rather than giving precedence to his own role (contrary to most of his peers).⁴⁹ His conclusion is more to the point, even though it might appear to be a contradiction: the decision was right, but the result was inevitable.

Even correct policies determined through rational decision-making processes might end in failure, especially in state administration. When Ottoman policy makers had to choose between two options, each seeming riskier than the other, they opted for the one that would minimize the Russian risk. Within this framework they attained the desired result: the CUP government won the war that it started with Russia and successfully achieved the intended consequences of its policy choice. Yet the decision had unintended consequences: the war did not come to an end with the Brest-Litovsk Treaty and Russia's former allies kept on fighting, eventually sealing the fate of the Ottoman Empire.

NOTES

- For an important work that inspired this chapter, see Haluk Ülman, Birinci Dünya Savaşına Giden Yol.
- Among the most commonly quoted representative works on this subject are Winston Churchill, *The World Crisis*; Edward Grey, Viscount of Fallodon, *Twenty-Five Years*; Serge Sazonov, *Les années fatales*; Maurice Bompard, "L'entrée en guerre de la Turquie"; and Henry Morgenthau, *Ambassador Morgenthau's Story*.
- 3. Ironically, Mustafa Kemal himself does not share the deception-collusion view. See *TBMM Zabit Ceridesi*, April 24, 1920.
- 4. This is attested by the constant external and domestic pressures for "reform" having become a characteristic feature of the Ottoman foreign relations of the period.
- 5. Graham Allison, "Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis."
- 6. Yusuf Hikmet Bayur, Türk İnkılabı Tarihi, 133–44.
- 7. Said Halim Paşa, L'Empire Ottoman et la Guerre Mondiale, 15, 17–20.
- 8. Joseph Heller, *British Policy towards the Ottoman Empire*, 162–63.
- 9. Frank G. Weber, *Eagles on the Crescent*, 62–67; Michael A. Reynolds, *Shattering Empires*, 110; also Ernest Jäckh, *Yükselen Hilal*, 152–53.
- 10. Sazonov, *Les années fatales*, 134–35.
- 11. This was so obvious that the Russian Duma and the public in general received the news of the October 29 raid with excitement, presumably because accounts could finally be settled, with the undesirable obligations toward the Ottoman Empire thus lifted. See Sazonov, *Les années fatales*, 260–62; also Maurice Paléologue, *An Ambassador's Memoirs*, diary entries for October 29 and November 9.
- 12. E. E. Adamov, Sovyet Devlet Arşivi Gizli Belgelerinde Anadolu'nun Taksimi Planı;

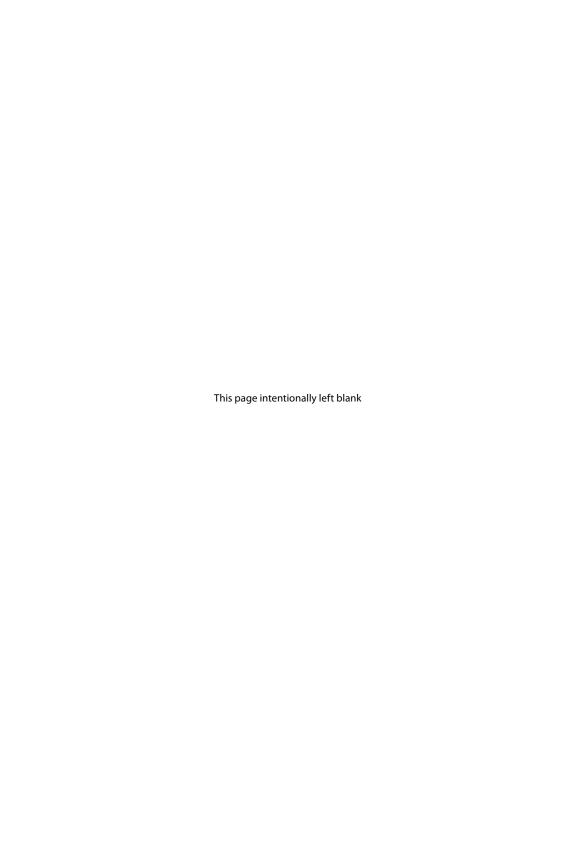
- A. de Lapradelle et al., Constantinople et les Détroits; Pages d'histoire 1914–1915; Albert Pingaud, *Histoire diplomatique de la France pendant la Grande Guerre*.
- 13. Keith Wilson, "Britain."
- 14. For a commentary on Humann's role, see Jäckh, Yükselen Hilal, 161-63.
- 15. Mahmoud Moukhtar Pacha, La Turquie, l'Allemagne, et l'Europe, 255-56. Jäckh, however, claims otherwise: Yükselen Hilal, 155-56.
- 16. F.A.K. Yasamee ("Ottoman Empire," 258-59) underlines the conspiratorial nature of and the power struggles involved in the Ottoman decision making.
- 17. Alpay Kabacalı, ed., Talat Paşa'nın Anıları, 34, 40, 42.
- 18. Cemal Paşa, *Hatıralar*, 142–52, 155–56, 157–65.
- 19. Ibid., 173-78.
- 20. Osman Selim Kocahanoğlu, İttihat Terakki'nin Sorgulanması ve Yargılanması, 57–76; Said Halim Paşa L'Empire Ottoman et la Guerre Mondiale, 21–23, 27–28.
- 21. Orhan Birgit, ed., *Halil Menteşe'nin Anıları*, 187–88, 189–90, 206–8.
- 22. Mithat Şükrü Bleda, İmparatorluğun Çöküşü, 78-79.
- 23. Kocahanoğlu, İttihat Terakki'nin Sorgulanması ve Yargılanması, 295-330.
- 24. Kazım Karabekir, Cihan Harbine Neden Girdik, Nasıl Girdik, Nasıl İdare Ettik, 73, 327, 55, 41.
- 25. Ali İhsan Sabis, *Harb Hatıralarım*, 25–26, 27, 55, 41.
- 26. Jäckh, Yükselen Hilal, 186-92.
- 27. Liman von Sanders, Türkiye'de 5 Yıl, 30-32, 41-43; Friedrich Kress von Kressenstein, Son Haçlı Seferi, 14–15, 21.
- 28. Kress von Kressenstein, Son Haçlı Seferi, 14–15.
- 29. Liman von Sanders, Türkiye'de 5 Yıl, 48.
- 30. Joseph Pomiankowski, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Çöküşü, 54.
- 31. Ulrich Trumpener, Germany and the Ottoman Empire, 33.
- 32. Pomiankowski, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Çöküşü, 32.
- 33. For an official account of Ottoman military preparations, see Cemal Akbay, Birinci Dünya Harbinde Türk Harbi.
- 34. Sean McMeekin argues that "when" rather than "whether" was the only real question after the August 2 mobilization orders: The Russian Origins of the First World War, 103.
- 35. Akbay, Birinci Dünya Harbinde Türk Harbi, 69-81.
- 36. It is worth noting that a similar policy was followed by Turkey's leaders from the same generation during World War II.
- 37. Kocahanoğlu, İttihat Terakki'nin Sorgulanması ve Yargılanması, 58-59.
- 38. Sabis, Harb Hatıralarım, 80.
- 39. Except perhaps Ambassador Michael De Giers: see McMeekin, The Russian Origins of the First World War, 111.
- 40. Akbay, Birinci Dünya Harbinde Türk Harbi, 104.
- 41. İsmet İnönü, İnönü'nün Hatıraları, 131; according to article 24 of the 1924 constitution, "Duties such as ratifying international agreements, making peace treaties, declaring war... are exclusively performed by the Grand National Assembly." This principle has always been present in the subsequent constitutions of Turkey.
- 42. Ibid., 136.
- 43. Meclisi Mebusan Zabıt Ceridesi, December 3, 1917, 175–76.

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- 44. Meclisi Ayan Zabıt Ceridesi, December 24, 1917, 169.
- 45. Ibid., 9.
- 46. Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire*, 19; Ahmad, *From Empire to Republic*, 148; Yasamee, "Ottoman Empire," 258; Mustafa Aksakal, "The Limits of Diplomacy," 202; Mustafa Aksakal, *Harb-i Umumi Eşiğinde Osmanlı*, 4–5, 220–23; Reynolds, *Shattering Empires*, 252.
- 47. McMeekin, The Russian Origins of the First World War, 98-141.
- 48. Reynolds, Shattering Empires, 130.
- 49. Carl Mühlmann, İmparatorluğun Sonu 1914, 138-51.

PART II

Ideas, Ideologies, and Human Agency



Young Turks, Old State

The Ontological (In)Security of the State and the Continuity of Ottomanism

Serhun Al

In order to understand the mind-set and psyche of the late Ottoman political environment, especially Young Ottomans and Young Turks, it is essential to understand the political and intellectual milieu within which these forces of saving and empowering the state came into being in the longest century of the Ottoman Empire. As this chapter seeks to elaborate, the most important ideational and political framework within which these elites were raised and influenced was the idea/policy of Ottomanism—a state project of patriotism that sought legal equality across religious and ethnic communities under a supranational state identity. Both the Young Ottomans and Young Turks, two successive generations who came to characterize the late Ottoman constitutional movement, were self-declared Ottomanists and projected the inculcation of patriotism as the major way to save the Ottoman state from collapse. The existing literature emphasizes ruptures in identity politics of the late Ottoman ruling elites (Ottomanism, Islamism, and Turkism), especially the portrayal of the Young Turks as Turkish nationalists. But I argue that understanding the notion of Ottomanism within the conceptual context of the state and its ontological security on the one hand and patriotism on the other significantly reveals Ottomanism's continuity in state policy, perhaps until the end of World War I.

By "patriotism" I mean political identification with the state and the concern for the state's survival and well-being, which leads to willingness to sacrifice for the promotion of such a cause. Thus the primary emphasis of patriotism is on the survival and continuity of the state rather than

on prioritizing any ethnic or cultural community, which is the concern of nationalism. For this reason it is problematic to use the concepts of nationalism and patriotism interchangeably, especially in the context of Ottomanism.

By "ontological security of the state" I mean a condition and question of existence and survival that is widely used in theories of international relations. For instance, Kenneth Waltz argues that "survival is a prerequisite to achieving any goals that states may have." Although the meaning of security is primarily associated with the concept of survival, some scholars particularly embrace the concept of ontological security as "security as being" in the sense of routinizing everyday practices that institutionalize order and continuity.4 When such order and continuity of security as being are challenged internally and externally, fear and anxiety emerge as a response to a specific threat. For instance, Brent J. Steele writes: "An agent is ontologically secure when they choose a course of action comfortable with their sense of self-identity. When critical situations become frequent, agents feel insecure because their routine is incapable of accommodating such circumstances. An agent must therefore reform behaviour to accompany them. This explains why agents (states) change behavior."5

Thus ontological security of the state should be framed not just in terms of its physical security but in terms of its psychological security as well. The state is ontologically secure as long as its physical and psychological condition of being is not under constant internal or external threat that would challenge its existence and survival. If it is not secure, such a state should be considered a weak state. The Tanzimat in general and Ottomanism in particular were reactions to such perceptions of state insecurity.

The Tanzimat era (1839–76) is a period when some reformist political elites initiated the reorganization of the legal, administrative, and military institutions of the Ottoman Empire in order to catch up with the rapidly modernizing European powers. In the conventional late Ottoman historiography it is considered to be a response to external pressure from the European powers and internal pressure from various provincial uprisings against the state. These external and internal forces are of course deemed to be mutually reinforcing rather than being analytically separate conditions. In other words, the social engineering project of the Tanzimat era is seen as a top-down and outside-in formulation with little popular support and little impact on nonelite subjects, along with Europeanization and modernization paradigms.

I approach Ottomanism as the backbone of the Tanzimat mentality in terms of centralization and integration goals, which would in turn create an administrative and social base of power for the Ottoman state. The function of Ottomanism as an antidote to the ontological insecurity of the state was very crucial in the mind-set of late Ottoman elites from Tanzimat reformers to the Young Turks. In order to understand and explain this connection I first discuss the internal and external conditions that led to the birth of Ottomanism as a state policy of patriotism and the role of Ottomanism in the project of "empowering the state" as the fundamental purpose of the Tanzimat. 8 Then I discuss how this political and intellectual milieu of reformism in regard to securing and empowering the state showed continuity in the later generations of the Ottoman political milieu, particularly among the Young Ottomans and the Young Turks. This chapter seeks to address the following research questions (1) What made the Ottoman state weak? (2) How did the political elites perceive this weakness and seek to empower the state through Ottomanism? (3) Why did Ottomanism come to the fore of Ottoman politics in the mid-nineteenth century? (4) What was the crisis that the project of Ottomanism attempted to ameliorate? (5) How did Ottomanism show continuity in the mind-set of political elites from the early nineteenth century to the early twentieth century in regard to saving and empowering the state?

In light of the dialectical framework involving the concepts of Ottomanism, patriotism, and the ontological security of the state, two crucial approaches need to be emphasized. First is the conceptual distinction between nationalism and patriotism in the context of the state. Second is the ideational/policy continuity regarding Ottomanism in relation to the ontological security of the state, rather than a rupture between the early nineteenth century reformist elites and the early twentieth century political elites. In other words, the mind-set of the late Ottoman elites including the Young Turks should be discussed critically and analytically both in relation to and within the context of the state and the concept of patriotism rather than nationalism.

OTTOMANISM AS A STATE PROJECT OF PATRIOTISM AND ITS DISCONTENTS

The traditional institutional setting of the state-society relationship in the Ottoman Empire was based on the millets. Despite its contemporary use referring to a nation, *millet* in fact refers to a religious term *cemaat*

(religious community). The millets of the Ottoman Empire included Greek Orthodox, Jews, and Armenians, while the main millet (*millet-i hakime*) was the Muslim community. The administration of these millets was based on a system of self-rule and local rule. As Kemal Karpat clearly puts it: "The Ottoman state developed a policy toward its ethnic-religious communities designed not to change their ethnic composition or to affect their identity but, rather, to integrate them into the administrative system by recognizing and giving them a large degree of cultural and religious autonomy and local self-rule."

The millets experienced freedom from state intervention in their internal affairs: they had the right to property, life, religious freedom, and protection in exchange for special taxes.¹¹ Although this system of ruling was necessary and crucial for pragmatic reasons in administering extensive lands of diverse populations rather than being based on rights,¹² it was also a reflection of tolerance and perception of justice under Islamic law.¹³

This imperial system of ruling undoubtedly constitutes an oxymoronic reflection of the contemporary idea of a nation-state. While "empires are large political units, expansionist or with a memory of power extended over space, polities that maintain distinction and hierarchy as they incorporate new people,"14 the nation-state emphasizes the homogeneity of the people within its borders despite the more complex reality in most cases. Thus the raison d'être of the nation-state tends to create majority and minority distinctions among the populations under its authority. Seeing the Ottoman social system of millets through a majority/ minority lens would be both anachronistic and reductionist. The concept of a minority, which originated in Western political philosophy, did not have any political meaning in the Ottoman Empire until the European ideas of popular suffrage and nationalism reached the Ottoman body politic in the nineteenth century, according to Elie Kedourie.¹⁵ The millets of the Ottoman Empire gradually began to turn into minority and majority affiliations as the Ottoman state started to follow European ideas of modernization in the nineteenth century. The project of Ottomanism sought to prevent the millets from turning into ethnoreligious minorities.

Prior to the nineteenth-century reform age, Ottoman identity or Ottomanness "was not a widespread social identity; it was, rather, a way of highlighting the very culture of the ruling elites." ¹⁶ In other words, to be or not to be Ottoman drew the boundaries of the ruling elite and the ruled subjects beyond ethnic and religious lines. The Ottoman Imperial

Edict of 1839, Reform Edict of 1856, Ottoman Nationality Law of 1869, and first Ottoman constitution in 1876 in one way or another attempted to transform the Ottoman identity into an overarching common identity for all through its vertical classification of ruler versus the ruled and horizontal classification of the Muslim millet versus the non-Muslim millets. This process of transformation was at the center of the idea of Ottomanism.

Ottomanism can be defined as an elitist political approach that accepted diverse ethnic and religious groups in the empire under a single and united Ottoman community and aimed to integrate these different groups into a common imperial ideal.¹⁷ Although the conventional late Ottoman historiography extensively relies on the vocabulary of nationalism, the notion of patriotism is underscored. Patriotism differs from nationalism in the sense that patriotism seeks loyalty and allegiance to the state. In other words, "patriotism can be defined as love of one's country, identification with it, and special concern for its well-being and that of compatriots." 18 Ottomanism was not a state project of promoting a certain cultural or religious group over others but of enhancing loyalty to the homeland and to the state in a heterogeneous demographic landscape. Hakan Yavuz also points to the analytical distinction between nationalism and patriotism. He sees Ottomanism "as a way of cementing solidarity toward the state while maintaining the cosmopolitan nature of the empire." To that end new state schools were opened, bringing Muslim, Christian, and Jewish students together, and the modern bureaucratic apparatus attracted non-Muslims based on meritocracy.²⁰ This is why the concept of vatan (homeland) found a new discursive ground in the mental maps of Ottoman bureaucrats and diplomats. As Behlül Özkan states, "promoting vatan as a territorial concept to secure the loyalty of subjects served as a modern political foundation of the Ottoman state."21 Thus Ottomanism crosscuts the dichotomy of civic and ethnic nationalism and in fact refers to a prototypal form of what Jürgen Habermas popularized as "constitutional patriotism." The goal of constitutional patriotism was overcoming "pre-political, i.e. national and cultural, loyalties in public life, and supplanting them with a new, postnational, purely political identity embodied in the laws and institutions."23 The purpose of this is to impersonalize the state. Overall, Ottomanism referred to a gradual institutional transition from a segregation-based millet system (in which individuals and communities should remain in their own borders) toward an integrationist model in which Ottoman identity became the new melting pot.²⁴

Although this discussion of Ottomanism analyzes the ideal type, the reality on the ground was of course more complex. Rather than being monolithic in discourse and practice, Ottomanism had many faces in the sense that the intention of the state and the intentions of the communities in various peripheries clashed, overlapped, and contradicted each other. Ottomanism as a discourse was a contested zone where liberal, communitarian, religious, and ethnic perceptions of imperial nationhood and citizenship competed. Although the intention of the state was to build a common and singular political identity "united in spirit and in purpose,"25 certain political figures in the Ottoman periphery interpreted Ottomanism and Ottoman identity as flexible in the sense of being used as a hyphenated identity. For instance, Şemseddin Sami Bey, an ethnic Albanian, considered his Ottoman identity to be an association with the fatherland and his Albanian identity to be identification with his homeland and saw patriotic devotion to the Ottoman state and national commitment to the land of Albania as mutually constitutive rather than exclusive.²⁶ Butrus al-Butsani, a Syrian educator and thinker, advocated "Arabic cultural revival, on the one hand, as a means of promoting progress and collective consciousness among the Syrians and of countering Western cultural influences; allegiance to the Ottoman state, on the other, as the best available means of countering this influence on the political level."²⁷ Al-Butsani saw no contradiction between Ottomanism and Syrian nationalism. He was aware of the aim of the Tanzimat reformers to produce a single but inclusive Ottoman identity. But he referred to the American case of nation building out of many European ethnicities, which were able to establish solidarity and American identity. In other words, like Şemseddin Sami Bey, al-Butsani envisaged a hyphenated Ottoman identity, in which particularistic identities of the periphery and the universalistic ideals of Istanbul could co-exist.

Julia Philips Cohen, in her analysis of Jewish imperial citizenship in the era of Sultan Abdülhamid II (1876–1909), reveals the ebbs and flows between what she calls civic Ottomanism (religiously and ethnically blind state policies toward different Ottoman communities) and Islamic Ottomanism (emphasis on Islam in state policies toward different Ottoman communities). Jewish communities struggled to emphasize civic Ottomanism.²⁸ Although Sultan Abdülhamid II leaned toward the emphasis on Islam, she argues that civic and Islamic Ottomanism were not mutually exclusive in the first place. Instead exclusive and inclusive patterns of Ottomanism were cyclical rather than linear, under varying conditions of tension and violence. For instance, Sephardic Jews were willing

to promote inclusive notions of civic Ottomanism for their own end, especially when the Armenian Revolutionary Federation placed bombs around Istanbul in 1896 and during the Greco-Turkish War on Crete in 1897. Thus Jewish communities tried to distance themselves from other non-Muslims who acted violently against the state.²⁹

In other words, analyzing the origins of Ottomanism and what it meant and the issues that it sought to solve from the point of view of the state, especially notions of empowering and legitimizing the Ottoman state, is crucial for understanding the continuities in late Ottoman intellectual and political thought. Taking the state as an object of analysis, the issue of what made Ottomanism timely in the mid-nineteenth century in response to an ontological security crisis needs further attention and elaboration. The external and internal conditions that pushed the Ottoman bureaucrats and diplomats to promote the idea of Ottomanism still need systematic and theoretical examination in order to understand when and why the state *acts* in response to the moments of crisis. Understanding the power and legitimacy structures of the modern state is essential for this purpose.

BRINGING THE STATE BACK IN: THE LATE OTTOMAN STATE AND ITS POWER STRUCTURES

I focus on a state-centric explanation for my analysis of identity building through Ottomanism, so it is first essential to articulate the logic of being a state and practicing its functions. Despite different perspectives on the state and the lack of a single general theory, one of the most accepted definitions of the modern state in contemporary scholarship comes from Max Weber. He emphasized the state as an entity that employs "the monopoly of legitimate use of physical force within a given territory."30 Being a modern state is incarnated in Weber's use of "monopoly" and "legitimate." Monopoly refers to centralization in bureaucratic and military fields, while legitimacy is associated with the social contract between the state and society. Although the use of violence in premodern states tended to be a private practice rather than an impersonal function such as employing mercenaries, the action of ruling over populations did not necessarily entail a social contract such as constitutions. The Ottoman state's transformation beginning with the Tanzimat was the attempt to come to terms with the Weberian modern state: establishing the monopoly of the legitimate use of violence by centralization in bureaucratic and military spheres and legitimacy through integration of all ethno-religious

communities under a common identity because the ontological security of the Ottoman state was at stake.

To be ontologically secure, the modern state depends on three assets: (1) territory, (2) sovereignty, and (3) legitimacy.³¹ Any internal or external threat to these three assets jeopardizes the ontological security of the state. For this reason the state is not a fixed entity but rather is constructed and reconstructed in temporal sequences. Territory, sovereignty, and legitimacy of the state can suffer crises either internally between state and nonstate actors or externally with other states. Theda Skocpol thus argues (like Otto Hintze) that "states necessarily stand at the intersection between domestic sociopolitical orders and the transnational relations within which they must maneuver for survival and advantage in relation to other states." Through this dynamic of ontological security we can better understand the logics of reform by the state and for the state. For instance, Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, a prominent statesman and historian of the Tanzimat era, similarly highlights the territory, sovereignty, and legitimacy problems within the Ottoman state. He discusses how the concept of homeland (vatan) was replacing religion as the catalyst for war-making capacities in Europe and argues that the Ottomans would experience difficulties in replacing Islam with vatan as the power base for Ottoman military's war-making capacity.³³ Thus the conscription of non-Muslims in the Ottoman military would be less likely to empower the Ottoman military but was a necessity more than an option because the Ottoman military was experiencing difficulties in recruiting Muslim soldiers. This was of course an outcome of the financial collapse of the Ottoman state in the mid-nineteenth century. According to Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, some considered this to be a state collapse. At this time, he says, it was rumored that European states would share in the partitioning of the Ottoman Empire. The power of the Ottoman state, in terms of its autonomy and capacity, was failing.

In regard to state power, "autonomy refers to the state's ability to formulate interests of its own, independent of or against the will of the divergent societal interest," while "capacity is defined here as the state's ability to implement strategies to achieve its economic, political, or social goals in society." Yet the sources of autonomy and capacity are not just material but also entail an immaterial base. This is why Tuong Vu aptly argues that "the state is no longer defined as a purely materialist concept; rather, a greater emphasis is now placed on immaterial (especially 'cultural') aspects of the state." The works of Antonio Gramsci in the early

twentieth century and Michael Mann in the late twentieth century have made important contributions to the understanding of the modern state's immaterial sources of power.³⁶ For Gramsci, the nature of the modern state cannot be understood without linking force and consent on the one hand and coercion and persuasion on the other. These two dimensions are historically and mutually constitutive, incarnating the meaning of the state.³⁷ In other words, "no state can maintain its stability and permanence without establishing mechanisms to generate legitimating institutions by which the consent of the population is mobilized."38 While Gramsci emphasizes consent or a persuasion mechanism in the survival of the state, Michael Mann focuses on the distinction between despotic and infrastructural power structures of the state. Despotic power refers to the extensive authority of the state without any need of consultation with the society or other nonstate actors; infrastructural power is built through penetration and collaboration with the society.³⁹ Heavy reliance on despotic power without grounding it on a sustainable infrastructural power is an important sign of weakness for modern states. In the cycle of state modernization attempts, Ottomanism definitely approached this immaterial conceptualization in terms of empowering the autonomy and capacity of the Ottoman state by creating a new infrastructural power base when the new European norms began to emphasize homeland more than religion.⁴⁰

Based on these approaches to state power, how can we contextualize the degree of power of the Ottoman state at the turn of the nineteenth century in order to put the rise of Ottomanism into a historical context in terms of its intention and timing? Did the Ottoman state have despotic and infrastructural power both internally and externally in the beginning of the nineteenth century and in the twentieth century? Was the state capacity sufficient to put various governing policies forward and rule over the peripheries? What was the degree of state autonomy from other power structures in the periphery and at the imperial center? How strong was the Ottoman state when the Young Turks came into power? Answering these questions helps in understanding two issues. First, the late Ottoman political elite mind-set can be critically and analytically contextualized within the concept of the state. Second, we can grasp the larger picture of continuities from the Tanzimat elites to the Young Turks within the cognitive framework of Ottomanism. Thus the notion of empowering the Ottoman state through the intended policies of Ottomanism can be more vividly examined.

INTERNAL OPPORTUNITIES AND EXTERNAL NECESSITIES: REFORMS AND THE EMERGENCE OF OTTOMANISM IN THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

By the 1800s the Ottoman political context corresponded to the weaker central state, stronger external rivals, and stronger provincial societal forces. The Ottoman state, which was still patrimonial as an extension of the sultan's dynasty, lacked both despotic and infrastructural power. Neither the material sources for war-making and the military nor the immaterial sources of penetrating the society to extract resources were sufficient. While the lack of manpower to make war was a real concern, "war, once an important source of income for the empire, had become a loss-making industry." ⁴¹ The unruly and arbitrary misconduct of provincial warlords and disobedient autonomous power networks of notables (ayan) was both threatening internal security and order and challenging the authority of Istanbul, as if the empire was consisted of multiple dynasties rather a single and supreme one. 42 The tax income base was mostly based on agriculture, in which the traditional tax-farming system strengthened the autonomous power of the ayans. In any case most of the tax income was spent by provincial administrations rather than by the central state. The Janissaries, an elite military faction, "garrisoned in the major provincial centres as well as in the capital, were a numerically large (and expensive) but militarily largely worthless body, strong enough to terrorize the government and population alike, but too weak to defend the empire." 43 While this was a sign of declining military efficiency of the Ottoman Empire vis-à-vis the technologically advancing European armies, it was also a manifestation of the limited sovereignty of the Ottoman body politic. In other words, the capacity and autonomy of the Ottoman state in terms of the sultan's power to act *in* and *for* himself was limited.

From a historical-sociological perspective, Tim Jacoby very successfully narrates the change and continuity in the Ottoman state by adopting Michael Mann's interpretation of imperial rule, which lays out the notions of infrastructural and despotic power. ⁴⁴ He argues that the ulema and Islam functioned as the primary infrastructural power of the Ottoman state:

Underpinned by the flexibility of the $\ddot{o}rf$ [custom], the imperial state maintained a polity of sufficient adaptability to prevent diverse socio-economic strata at the periphery from decentralising

power and then forming an intermediary class between its agents and the plebeian *reaya* [subjects; literally, the flock]. In seeking to institutionalise a direct relationship between ruler and ruled through a hierarchically organised network of clerics, soldiers and administrators, the Ottomans transformed Islam's innate transcendentalism into an immanent ideological infrastructure.⁴⁵

Once this traditional infrastructural power diminished in parallel to the military decline and Ottoman elites' perception of a weakening state, the viable alternative to the Islamic ideological base of the Ottoman state was the project of Ottomanism. For instance, in Ma'ruzat Ahmed Cevdet Paşa is well aware that the infrastructural power base of religion was being superseded with the concept of the vatan. Although the political attachment and identification with the homeland was established gradually in a European context, he states that replacing Islam with the idea of the Ottoman vatan would need a few generations to become established. Until then, Ahmed Cevdet Paşa argues, the Ottoman military would remain "soulless." 46 The Ottoman ruling elites were becoming increasingly aware of the relatively weakening imperial state both in relation to other states and in relation to domestic peripheral forces. Ottomanism was the recipe to overcome the state crisis of ontological security. The question of this institutional transition cannot be grasped, however, unless three levels of analysis are not taken into account: (1) the structural changes at the international or regional level, (2) internal changes within the Ottoman state, and (3) societal changes at the periphery of the Ottoman Empire.

The International Context and Structural Changes

Hendrik Spruyt's *Ending Empire* "attempts to explain why compromise and accommodation resolved some nationalist conflicts and why hardline policies led to conflict and bloodshed in other instances." He argues that "while international environment provided catalysts for change, domestic politics explains the variation in policies." The changes in the international system triggered many domestic sociopolitical disorders in the Ottoman Empire.

Eric Weitz's analysis of the shift in the nineteenth-century international order from the Vienna system to the Paris system argues that the interstate system moved away from dynastic legitimacy and state sovereignty with clearly defined borders toward population politics along with state sovereignty congruent with national homogeneity. The protection of minority rights, civilizing missions, and humanitarian interventions

had become international issues amid the Great Power politics. For Weitz, liberal principles following the French and American revolutions and European imperialism are the two main factors behind the structural shift in international order. Following Weitz's analysis, Michael Reynolds successfully places the collapse of the Ottoman state within this international context, where interstate competition deeply affected domestic policy making with its intended and unintended consequences. 49 The issue of "minority rights" was in fact a means of Great Power competition. The Ottoman state was by no means outside of the structural changes at the international level. Yet weakening military capacity, declining economic resources and inefficiency, and declining rule-making and order-enforcing institutions made the Ottoman Empire a follower of the new discourses and practices of the newly emerging European norms. In other words, the Ottoman state was not in a position to generate new discourses that could (re)shape the international system: the Ottomans were the inevitable followers of the external discourses.

Davide Rodogno's analysis of the political history of humanitarian intervention argues that the discourse and practice of intervening in other states in the name of ending human sufferings in the target state was incarnated within the relationship between the Ottoman Empire and the European powers, especially in the context of the Eastern Question, a concern over the political and social conditions of Christian populations in the Ottoman Balkans.⁵⁰ Two ideas were projected as solutions to this humanitarian crisis as perceived by the European powers: the dismemberment of the empire or the modernization of the empire through transformative reforms. As Rodogno reveals, however, the European discourse of humanitarian intervention lacked legitimacy due to two shortcomings of the Europeans themselves: (1) the Orientalist rhetoric that the European civilization was superior to the "barbarian" Ottomans and (2) the hypocrisy of the discourse, which ignored European treatment of human populations in their colonies, such as the French treatment of Algerians. Thus the idea of humanitarian intervention, especially in the Ottoman territories, was more a realist notion of Great Power imperialism and power-seeking than a liberal notion of promoting political and civil rights per se. This is why the establishment of the Concert of Europe in 1815 exercised a nonintervention clause only among European powers themselves. Although the Ottoman Empire joined the Concert of Europe in 1856, the external pressure for reforms was present throughout the nineteenth century.

Societal Changes in the Periphery: Domestic Disorders

We cannot understand the conditions that pushed the Ottoman ruling elites who perceived the state as materially and immaterially weak without noting the claims of various peripheral movements and the incapacity of the state to respond to these claims in a timely manner. The Greek independence and Serbian autonomy in the first half of the nineteenth century were the key challenges that put the Ottoman state into an ontological security crisis. As Carter Findley argues, "Greek independence and Serbian autonomy signaled the start of a reconfiguration that would ultimately shatter the equilibria and relationships that held the multinational Islamic empire together."51 Moreover, Şükrü Ilıcak provides a detailed description of the Greek insurgency (1821-26), a topic that has been largely ignored in the history of the late Ottoman Empire according to Ilicak. He considers the effect of the Greek insurgency on the Ottoman ruling elites greater than is often thought. For him, the Greek insurgency "proved to be a war of survival both for the insurgents and the Ottoman central state: the former struggling literally for their existence, the latter forced to rethink its system of imperial allegiances and human capital, carry out two colossal operations of social engineering and recast its military establishment and society in order to prevent collapse." The Greek insurgency was not the only mobilization against Istanbul, but it had deep and long-lasting impacts in the nineteenth-century Ottoman state and society due to its discursive content and form of separatism. The holistic transformative approach of reforms was the vivid manifestation of the perception of the weakness in the state apparatus of the empire. This is why the sultan viewed the separatist movement as a reflection of the weak state rather than a conscientious political action by the insurgents.

Inside the State: Power Networks and the Attempts at Power Consolidation at the Center

For Selçuk Akşin Somel, the first elite-level ideas of Ottomanism after 1839 were conducive to the authoritarian centralization of the state.⁵³ This is why İlber Ortaylı states that the Westernization of the empire in the nineteenth century was more an outcome of domestic processes than a direct result of external pressures.⁵⁴ In other words, the power consolidation at the center vis-à-vis other power networks such as the Janissaries and the provincial ayans created more opportunity spaces for the Ottoman Sublime Porte to initiate, design, and implement reforms.

The aim of Ottomanism was to strengthen the state not just externally but internally as well, because traditional power centers such as the Janissaries and the increasing power of provincial notables (ayans) vis-à-vis the central state was a sign of what Ortaylı calls "double sovereignty." During the second half of the eighteenth century, the central government relied heavily on the *ayan* both for troops and for tax collection (many notables held official posts as tax collectors)." Some of these families even conducted independent foreign relations without any control by the central government. The reformist mind-set thus was also a reaction to the warlord ayans. The call for the sultan to consolidate the power of the center and the foundation of the Sublime Porte as a shift from military bureaucracy to civic bureaucracy facilitated the initiation of Ottomanist reforms. In that regard the elimination of those who could veto the new institutionalization efforts was essential in the making of Ottomanism, which would preempt further weakening of the state.

In conclusion, the rise and the spread of Ottomanism in the mind-set of early nineteenth century Ottoman ruling elites came into being among mutually constitutive historical contingencies and temporal sequences. The context of these external necessities and internal opportunities for reform occurred in four interrelated relationships: (1) the interaction of European powers (along with their new norms) with the Ottoman state; (2) the interaction of European powers with Christian communities in the Ottoman territories; (3) the relationship between the Ottoman state and Ottoman society, especially with Christian communities; (4) the internal power competition within the Ottoman state (especially among ulema, provincial leaders, and the central government bureaucrats).

The peripheral challenges to the central state, especially the separatist Greek insurgency, pushed the Ottoman state elites to reconsider the condition of state weakness and strength. Meanwhile the rising European norms of humanitarian intervention and their realist articulation in the context of power-seeking rival states provided more opportunity spaces for insurgent movements against the Ottoman state. But the increasing diplomatic relations between the Ottoman state and European powers exposed the relative weakness of the Ottoman state to its foreign diplomats and bureaucrats. Yet reform would be less likely unless the power of the imperial center was consolidated vis-à-vis political actors with veto power such as the traditional military establishment and the semi-sovereign provincial notables.

This section clarifies the conditions that led to the first comprehensive identity reform (the patriotic Ottomanism project) in the Ottoman

Empire that sought a major paradigm shift from the institutionalized millet system. In terms of the timing of the incarnation of Ottomanism in the Ottoman body politic, a multilayered process of historical contingencies (external necessities) and temporal sequences (internal opportunities) occurred. External necessities speak to the structural trends in the international political environment, including the emergence of new international norms and their various uses for geopolitical competition and political gains by states. Internal opportunities point to the reaction to and adoption of these norms and political trends by domestic political actors (the state and the societal actors). As a result, this reform surrounding the Ottomanism project in response to the ontological security of the state, which was internally and externally threatened, established the state-centered mind-set of later Ottoman political thinkers and leaders, including the Young Ottomans and the Young Turks. Ill-fated conceptual confusions and rupture-oriented periodizations would be less likely if the emergence and claims of these Ottoman political and intellectual milieus were analyzed in the context of historical continuity in the context of the ontological security of the state, Ottomanism, and patriotism since the early nineteenth century. The next section discusses the evolution and continuity of Ottomanism as a state policy in the post-Tanzimat era, especially regarding the CUP's approach to Ottomanism and the state.

POST-TANZIMAT OTTOMANISM AND THE STATE: CONTINUITY OF THE SURVIVAL QUESTION

The Tanzimat reformers, particularly Ali Paşa and Fuad Paşa, cultivated the first seeds of Ottomanism in response to the internal and external challenges that the Ottoman state was encountering at the turn of the nineteenth century. Opposition to these reformers emerged in the 1860s in the form of the secret society called the Patriotic Alliance, later known as the Young Ottomans. Although the Young Ottomans were not necessarily against the reforms per se, "their intense patriotism made them think of reform for Ottomans, by Ottomans, and along Islamic lines." They considered the Tanzimat reforms to be the outcome of European pressures rather than of the Ottoman state acting independently by itself and for itself. The lack of separation of powers after the fall of the Janissaries and the declining influence of the ulema and the Tanzimat regime under the rule of Ali Paşa and Fuad Paşa were seen as more and more absolutist rule that rejected sharing power through a constitutional and parliamentary government. The reforms were viewed as concessions

to the European powers rather than a sovereign attempt of the state to defend and strengthen itself. Namik Kemal, a poet of the time and perhaps the most important figure among the Young Ottomans, publicized the concept of vatan (fatherland) through his play called *Fatherland or Silistire* (1873) within which the fatherland and Allah are seen as inseparable units of the state. ⁵⁹ This was not necessarily a challenge or opposition to Tanzimat Ottomanism, however, but a critique that Ottomanism "lacked complete legitimacy because it did not conform fully to Europe's discourse of reform or to the anchors of Islamic collective identity." ⁶⁰

Thus the legal equality of non-Muslims and Muslims was not a concern. It was not in contradiction with Islamic community values but was more about the condition of the state in the hands of the few and at the service of the European powers. The Young Ottomans sought to utilize Ottomanism to make the Ottoman state sovereign and independent through the institutions of constitutional and parliamentary rule. This legacy of the state persona continued within the Young Turks as well.

The conditions surrounding the ontological security of the state pushed the Ottoman governing elites to reform by initiating the project of Ottomanism in the early nineteenth century. But the intended goals of establishing a stronger Ottoman state with new institutions and a new raison d'état were curtailed by more crises at the turn of the twentieth century. The Ottoman state became weaker to the point that it could not even provide security for its Muslim populations let alone establish a secure political and social environment for non-Muslim communities. The Russo-Turkish War of 1877–78 and the resulting Treaty of Berlin in 1878 and the Balkan Wars of 1912-13 (which ended with the death of the Ottoman state in Europe and the massacres of millions of Balkan Muslims) were important indicators of the Ottoman state's unrelenting weakening and incapacities despite the intentions of the Tanzimat reforms. Rather than promoting the aims of founding a ground of legal equality between Muslim and non-Muslim communities through Ottomanism, the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78 and the Treaty of Berlin further legitimized the idea of borders based on national homogeneity in the international state system and led to further national aspirations for communities within the empire, such as Armenians, Macedonians, and Albanians. At the end of the Balkan Wars the Ottoman state lost 83 percent of its land and 69 percent of its population in Europe. 61 The Ottoman Empire basically turned into an Anatolian state, with Muslims constituting the majority of the population. This was of course a devastating experience for the Ottoman ruling elites, because the Balkan territories were the engine

of multireligious and multilinguistic harmony and the economic power house of Ottoman wealth.

If Greek separatism and independence (1821–32) was shocking to the "almighty" Ottoman state at that time, the post-1878 period and the Balkan Wars laid the ground for more devastating national struggles and territory losses in conjunction with European economic and political interventions against the state on multiple fronts. After such military defeats and the resulting legitimacy deficits, ⁶² the state became completely ontologically insecure. The Ottoman elites encountered fear and anxiety about how to keep the only remaining territory in their hands: Anatolia. For instance, Talat Paşa, one of the leading figures of the CUP during World War I, reveals in his memoirs the fear and anxiety over the survival of the state. He states that the theory "power overrides right" was apparent for Devlet-i Aliyye (Sublime State) after the defeat in the Balkans, referring to the weakness of the state. ⁶³ The desperate need for an external ally was inevitable.

In the search for an external ally in order to revitalize the psychologically and physically defeated state and distorted social psyche, entering World War I on the side of Germany was a risk but also an opportunity to secure the survival of the remaining Muslim Anatolia. According to Mustafa Aksakal, a diplomatic historian of the Ottoman involvement in World War I, by 1914 the Ottoman elite (the CUP) believed that the only way to cease the further partition of the state was through military power. World War I functioned as an opportunity space in that regard.⁶⁴ Under the siege of European Capitulations that favored the trading activities of the Ottoman Christians and European political tutelage, the Ottoman state was only de facto a sovereign and independent entity. As Zafer Toprak argues, the CUP entered World War I to gain back its sovereignty and full economic and political independence from the European powers. 65 If it was isolated from international politics, neither material nor immaterial sources of state power were sufficient to prevent the further disintegration of the Ottoman Empire. 66

The state-centric mentality of the late Ottoman elites would be better understood in the context of understanding Ottomanism as patriotism and the Ottomanists as empire-savers rather than empire-destroyers. Amid the turmoil in the post-Tanzimat era, Ottomanism was still the driving force of the state after 1878 until the end of World War I. Although Sultan Abdülhamid II emphasized the role of Islam and the institution of the caliphate after this war's catastrophic loss for the Muslim world in general and the Ottoman state in particular after the Russo-Turkish

War of 1877–78, the policy of Ottomanism was not abolished, at least in a legal sense. Hasan Kayalı argues that Sultan Abdülhamid II's Islamic policy "did not entail a novel definition of the fatherland; nor did it jeopardize the legal status and rights that the non-Muslims had gained under the secular Ottomanism of the preceding decades, though clearly Hamidian ideology was exclusionary from a social and psychological point of view with respect to non-Muslims." Thus the Hamidian era should not be read as a sharp rupture from the Tanzimat (1839–76) as often done in the discussions of late Ottoman history. Frederick Anscombe also points to this continuity, especially from a perspective of religion, because "the Ottoman state had always been of and for Muslims first."

The Young Turks (Committee of Union and Progress) emerged and evolved as a coalition of oppositional figures who opposed the authoritarian policies of Sultan Abdülhamid II. It was a coalition because the organization was neither monolithic nor unified in its political agenda. ⁶⁹ The main concern that brought the oppositional figures together was reinstituting the Ottoman constitution and thus creating accountability in the arbitrary rule of the sultan. The Young Turks were not all Turks and did not share a similar ideology, so they considered the constitution to be the guarantor of liberal politics within which İttihad-1 Anasır (union of all Ottoman elements, Muslims and non-Muslims, Turks and non-Turks alike) would be secured and established. In Talat Paşa's words, the CUP aimed for "the progress and rise of the common *vatan* through the union of all Ottoman elements." ⁷⁰

Neither Sultan Abdülhamid II nor the CUP completely shied away from the idea of Ottomanism. However, prominent scholars such as M. Şükrü Hanioğlu analyze the CUP in the framework of Turkish nationalism. According to Hanioğlu, the true agenda of the CUP included:

a strong government, the dominant role played by an intellectual elite, anti-imperialism, a society in which Islam would play no governing role, and a Turkish nationalism that would bloom later.... The last item on the agenda was controversial, since some CUP members were not Turkish. While Turkish members gravitated toward Turkish nationalism, which became the guiding ideology of the CUP, especially after 1906, the non-Turkish members leaned toward their own respective nationalist movements.⁷¹

Hasan Kayalı, one of the leading scholars of the Young Turks, however, argues: The Young Turks envisaged the creation of a civic-territorial, indeed revolutionary-democratic, Ottoman political community by promoting an identification with the state and the country through the sultan and instituting representative government. Though they remained committed to the monarchy within the constitutional framework, they conceived of an Ottoman state and society akin to the French example in which religion and ethnicity would be supplanted by "state-based patriotism." ⁷²

While Kayali's and Hanioğlu's approaches are two contradictory views regarding the identity politics of the CUP, Erik J. Zürcher introduces a somewhat vague framework of "Ottoman Muslim nationalism" by rejecting the identity categorizations of Turkish nationalism, Islamism, and Ottomanism:

The Unionists' ideology was nationalist in the sense that they demanded the establishment of a state of their own: before 1918 they took every step to make the existing Ottoman state the Muslims' own and after 1918 they fought to preserve what remained of that Ottoman Muslim state and to prevent it from being carved up. But the nation for which they demanded this political home was that of the Ottoman Muslims—not that of all of the Ottomans, not only that of the Turks and certainly not that of the Muslims of the world.⁷³

Kayali's and Zürcher's approaches eliminate the portrayal of the CUP as Turkish nationalists, but Kayali's thesis is more cautious in conceptualizing the CUP era as a nationalist period even though the CUP utilized Islamic values and discourses after 1913. Kayali emphasizes "state-based patriotism." What is usually underscored in this controversial debate is the primacy of the state and concerns over its continuity and survival through policies in reaction to the internal and external political and socioeconomic realities. For instance, Erol Ülker, in parallel with Kayali's approach, argues that what is often regarded as Turkification before 1913 represented centralization efforts of the CUP rather than nation-building efforts. After 1913, although Turkification was taking place in Anatolia according to Ülker, this policy coexisted with other imperial policies. In other words, although Ülker frames the identity policies of the CUP as nation-building, especially after 1913, he fails to explain why Turkification was not a unified and a single policy of the CUP but rather one of the

imperial policies designed for Anatolia, as he claims. This is perhaps due to the centrality of Devlet-i Aliyye and the imperial vatan rather than the millet in the mind-set of the CUP elites. As empire-savers rather than nation-state admirers, the CUP elites sought to hang on to Ottomanism, perhaps with more emphasis on Islamic values and discourses after the Balkan Wars. The project of nation-state only became feasible during the so-called National Independence War (1919–22). If Ottomanism is read as a project of patriotism rather than nationalism, then the ideational continuity between early nineteenth century reformers and early twentieth century Ottoman political elites would be revealed more clearly. Feroz Ahmad emphasizes this continuity as well:

The CUP was a direct extension of the reform movement of the nineteenth century, especially the Young Ottomans, and like them it was concerned only with the problem of how to save the Empire. Fundamentally, the Young Turks provided the same answer as the Young Ottomans of the 1860s and 1870s; to introduce constitutional government, thereby curbing the power of the Sultan, and at the same time satisfying the aspirations of the minorities by giving them equal rights within the law.⁷⁵

Although Young Ottomans were critical of the sultan's regime, they were also very loyal to the state. They were very cautious in their ideas and actions in order to prevent any potential harm to the Ottoman state. This common psyche of saving and empowering the state among the late Ottoman political elites from the early nineteenth century to the early twentieth century is at the center of understanding Ottomanism as a project of patriotism. None of these political elites sought to disintegrate the Ottoman Empire and found a new state other than the Ottoman state until the very end of World War I. Despite their different methods they were all Ottomanists in the sense of establishing an ontologically secure Ottoman state, as in its heyday. But understanding Ottomanism as a fixed and monolithic concept is also problematic. Ottomanism was a contested zone within the Ottoman political and intellectual milieu at the turn of the twentieth century.

For instance, Hakan Yavuz underlines at least three modes of Ottomanism. The first one emphasized legal equality of all before the law in the sense of a religiously and ethnically blind state and allowed the expression of local identities regardless of religion and ethnicity (Abdullah Cevdet). Second, Prince Sabahaddin approached Ottomanism as an idea

of developing a free market economy and adopting decentralization in the sense of administrative autonomy. Third, Ahmed Rıza emphasized the role of Islam as the moral center of Ottoman society for achieving cohesion.⁷⁷ The main debate over Ottomanism was whether the state should be centralized and thus become strong or should be decentralized and share the power with ethnoreligious community leaders. The CUP cadres opted for the centralization policy, so those who favored decentralization founded the Liberal Union Party in 1908 under the leadership of Prince Sabahaddin. The CUP's centralization policy fused with the policy of establishing a national economy favoring the Muslim merchants over the Christians, especially after the Balkan Wars. 78 The policy of national education based on the Turkish language was perceived as Turkification policy by some of the ethnoreligious communities. Yet "Turkish nationalism gained some influence in the Society, but never replaced Ottomanism." 79 Why? Perhaps ironically, M. Şükrü Hanioğlu provides a potential answer to this in his later study. He states that late Ottoman history should not be read as a struggle between competing ideologies, because ideas and ideological struggles are not the primary engines of historical change. Structural and domestic realities provided the main context for policy makers to choose one policy over another.⁸⁰

As noted in the first section above, Ottomanism came into being in temporal sequences and historical contingencies that made the Ottoman political elites in the early nineteenth century perceive the condition of the state as ontologically insecure. It was a turning point in the sense that the millet system no longer served the purposes of keeping the state intact but began to undermine the territorial integrity, sovereignty, and legitimacy of the state. 81 Ottomanism gradually replaced the millet system throughout the nineteenth century for the purpose of keeping the state ontologically secure and in one piece. Rather than being ideological choices of the state elites, these policy changes were direct outcomes of the structural and domestic realities noted in the first section. Thus a policy shift away from Ottomanism toward Turkism would entail the same structural and domestic realities rather than ideological motivations in order for the state elites to reconsider the continuity in their policy choices. Such realities in the CUP era only matured at the very end of the Balkan Wars, convincing the state elites that Ottomanism in terms of holding the empire intact through integration of Muslim and non-Muslim communities was no more feasible. Yet the shift was not mechanical in the sense that Ottomanism suddenly collapsed and Turkism was adopted. Instead the patriotism of Ottomanism evolved into a Muslim

patriotism with full devotion to the Ottoman state until the very end of World War I. This nonexpansionist Muslim patriotism was also found in the discourses of Mustafa Kemal, perhaps for strategic reasons until he consolidated his power in the mid-1920s. 82

CONCLUSION

The conventional late Ottoman periodization begins with the Tanzimat (1839–76) and its aims of secular integration of millets under a common Ottoman homeland; then came the Islamist policy of Sultan Abdülhamid II (1876–1909) through the emphasis on the institution of the caliphate; this was followed by the Young Turk rule (1908–18) along with the emphasis on the agenda of Turkish nationalism within the CUP. What makes this periodization somewhat problematic is the overrated emphasis on sharp ruptures within the political agendas of each governing elite, especially from a perspective of identity politics. Policy variations no doubt existed within these different periods, yet in the grand scheme of things such variations were the means toward the same end: the prevention of the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire and the institutional establishment of the Ottoman state's ontological security.

I believe that one of the reasons for this overrated emphasis on ruptures is the conceptual confusion over the forms and contents of identity politics attributed to each period. This problematic approach is perhaps built on Yusuf Akçura's three policies of Ottomanism, Islamism, and Turkism. 83 It considers these three identity politics options in the late Ottoman Empire mutually exclusive, each being the counterpart of the other. What is often neglected, however, is that Ottomanism was qualitatively different in its form and content than Islamism and Turkism. In other words, Ottomanism as a project of patriotism was an antidote to nationalism, while Islamism and Turkism were both compatible with the nationalist agendas. Ottomanism was inherently immune to constructing "internal others" because its primary focus was political attachment to the state, not a specific religious or ethnic community. But Islamism had its internal others in the non-Muslims, while Turkism had its internal others in the non-Turks. The late Ottoman political elites from the Tanzimat reformers to the Young Turks were very cautious about establishing internal others in order to prevent the excuses of European "humanitarian" intervention on the one hand and the political claims of various ethnoreligious communities on the other. So in one way or another their emphasis was much more on Ottomanism than on Islamism or Turkism.

Moreover, because all of these late Ottoman elites' first and foremost concern was the survival of the state, Ottomanism was pragmatically more compatible with this concern.

The second reason for the mutually exclusive and rupture-oriented approaches to the late Ottoman periodization is perhaps the neglect of the essential relationship between Ottomanism and the ontological security of the state. As noted, Ottomanism emerged under certain conditions that were threatening to the Ottoman Empire's physical state (territorial losses, antistate mobilizations) and psychological well-being (declining confidence in the empire). In this moment of fear and anxiety the Ottoman leaders aimed for institutional change in the qualitative nature of the state. Ottomanism as the backbone of this nineteenth-century transformation was the solution to overcome fear and anxiety within the state. Young Ottomans and Young Turks were both raised in this political, psychological, and intellectual milieu that placed the survival of the Ottoman state on the top of their agendas. This is why one was not qualitatively less Ottomanist than the other in each period of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. This trend only began to change paradigmatically after the end of World War I, when the National Pact under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal rejected the Ottoman legacy and pursued a completely new regime with a new identity for the state.

NOTES

- 1. İlber Ortaylı, İmparatorluğun En Uzun Yüzyılı.
- 2. For a conceptual and philosophical discussion of patriotism, see Igor Primoratz, "Patriotism"; also see George Orwell, "Notes on Nationalism."
- 3. Kenneth Waltz, Theory of International Politics, 129.
- 4. See the theoretical contributions of Brent J. Steele on the concept of ontological security: "Ontological Security and the Power of Self-Identity"; and Ontological Security in International Relations.
- 5. Steele, "Ontological Security and the Power of Self-Identity," 526.
- 6. See Frederick Anscombe's critical discussion on the survey of the late Ottoman historiography: "Conclusion."
- 7. This traditional approach was mostly articulated by Roderic H. Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 1856–1876. See also some revisionist perspectives such as Milen Petrov, "Everyday Forms of Compliance"; and Masayuki Ueno, "'For the Fatherland and the State."
- 8. Anscombe, "Conclusion."
- 9. Feride Aslı Ergül, "The Ottoman Identity."
- Kemal Karpat, "The Ethnicity Problem in a Multi-ethnic Anational Islamic State," 712.

- 11. Berdal Aral, "The Idea of Human Rights as Perceived in the Ottoman Empire."
- 12. See Karen Barkey's extensive study of the Ottoman state's discourse and practice of ruling over the heterogeneous populations: *Empire of Difference*. Behlül Özkan also extensively analyzes the mentality of the Ottoman rule over diverse populations by tracing the concept of homeland in the Ottoman Empire and how its meaning evolved over time to the founding of the Turkish Republic: *From the Abode of Islam to the Turkish Vatan*.
- 13. Aral, "The Idea of Human Rights as Perceived in the Ottoman Empire."
- 14. Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, Empires in World History, 8.
- 15. See Kedourie's excellent discussion on the origins of national majority and minority and how these Western concepts affected the Islamic philosophy of diversity in the Middle East: "Minorities and Majorities in the Middle East."
- 16. Ergül, "The Ottoman Identity," 643.
- Selçuk Akşin Somel, "Osmanlı Reform Çağında Osmanlıcılık Düşüncesi (1839–1913)."
- 18. Primoratz, "Patriotism."
- 19. M. Hakan Yavuz, "The Balkan Wars as a Catalyst of Homogenization," 41.
- George W. Gawrych, "Tolerant Dimensions of Cultural Pluralism in the Ottoman Empire."
- 21. Özkan, From the Abode of Islam to the Turkish Vatan, 33.
- 22. The phrase "constitutional patriotism" was first coined by German thinker Dolf Sternberger. Jürgen Habermas, *The New Conservatism*, 193. Also see a discussion on Habermas's idea of constitutional patriotism by Patchen Markell, "Making Affect Safe for Democracy?"
- 23. Primoratz, "Patriotism."
- 24. Erik J. Zürcher, Turkey.
- 25. Michelle U. Campos, Ottoman Brothers, 2.
- 26. Gawrych, "Tolerant Dimensions of Cultural Pluralism in the Ottoman Empire."
- Butrus Abu-Manneh, "The Christians between Ottomanism and Syrian Nationalism," 295.
- Julia Philips Cohen, "Between Civic and Islamic Ottomanism"; Julia Philips Cohen, Becoming Ottomans.
- Cohen, "Between Civic and Islamic Ottomanism."
- 30. Max Weber, "Politics as Vocation."
- 31. Stephen D. Krasner's Sovereignty is critical about the ontological meaning of sovereignty, while Seyla Benhabib's The Rights of Others maintains that the normative force of sovereignty has been an influential aspect of modern interstate relations, which she calls the Westphalian system; on legitimacy, see Gianfranco Poggi, The Development of the Modern State.
- 32. Theda Skocpol, "Bringing the State Back In," 8.
- 33. Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, Maruzat, 130.
- 34. Karen Barkey and Sunita Parikh, "Comparative Perspectives on the State," 525–26.
- 35. Tuong Vu, "Studying the State through State Formation," 164.
- 36. Antonio Gramsci, Selections from Prison Notebooks; Michael Mann, The Sources of Social Power, vols. 1 and 2.
- 37. Jonathan Moran, "Two Conceptions of State"; Benedetto Fontana, "Gramsci on Politics and State."

- 38. Gramsci cited in Fontana, "Gramsci on Politics and State," 168.
- 39. Moran, "Two Conceptions of State."
- 40. Özkan, From the Abode of Islam to the Turkish Vatan.
- 41. Zürcher, Turkey, 17.
- 42. Carter Findley, Turkey, Islam, Nationalism, and Modernity.
- 43. Zürcher, Turkey, 17.
- 44. Jacoby's book gives innovative insights on the background of the modern Turkish state through a macrohistorical analysis of the Ottoman past through the lens of Michael Mann's social power theory: Tim Jacoby, *Social Power and the Turkish State*. For the article-length version of the Ottoman state analysis, see Tim Jacoby, "The Ottoman State."
- 45. Jacoby, "The Ottoman State," 285.
- 46. Cevdet Paşa, Maruzat, 130.
- 47. Hendrik Spruyt, Ending Empire, xi.
- 48. Eric Weitz, "From the Vienna to the Paris System."
- 49. Michael A. Reynolds, Shattering Empires.
- 50. Davide Rodogno, Against Massacre.
- 51. Findley, Turkey, Islam, Nationalism, and Modernity, 64.
- 52. Şükrü Ilıcak, "A Radical Rethinking of Empire." 1.
- Selçuk Akşin Somel, "Osmanlı Reform Çağında Osmanlıcılık Düşüncesi (1839–1913)."
- 54. Ortaylı, İmparatorluğun En Uzun Yüzyılı.
- 55. Ibid., 34.
- 56. Zürcher, Turkey, 18.
- 57. Findley, Turkey, Islam, Nationalism, and Modernity.
- 58. Şerif Mardin, The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought, 21.
- 59. Namık Kemal, *Vatan Yahut Silistre*. For instance, one of the lines in the play is "Bilir misin, bence vatan iman ile beraberdir. Vatanını sevmeyen Allah'ı da sevmez" (You know, I think that the fatherland is not separate from faith. One who is not in love with the fatherland is not in love with God either) (63). See also Şerif Mardin, *Turkiye'de Din ve Siyaset, Makaleler* 3, 271.
- 60. Joseph Rahme, "Namik Kemal's Constitutional Ottomanism and Non-Muslims," 31.
- 61. Yavuz, "The Balkan Wars as a Catalyst of Homogenization," 58.
- 62. Selim Deringil also emphasizes the search for legitimacy of the Ottoman state throughout the nineteenth century. He states that even the Sultan Abdülhamid II "did not turn his back on the Tanzimat reforms but rather attempted to mold them to his advantage": "Legitimacy Structures in the Ottoman State," 345.
- 63. Talat Paşa, Hatıralarım ve Müdafaam, 28.
- 64. Mustafa Aksakal, The Ottoman Road to War in 1914.
- 65. Zafer Toprak, İttihat-Terakki ve Devletcilik.
- 66. For the long-lasting effects of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–78 on the legitimacy structures and power capacities of the Ottoman state, see a collection of essays devoted to this subject: M. Hakan Yavuz and Peter Sluglett, eds., War and Diplomacy.
- 67. Hasan Kayalı, Arabs and Young Turks, 31.
- 68. Anscombe, "Conclusion," 556.
- 69. Kayalı, Arabs and Young Turks.

- 70. Talat Paşa, Hatıralarım ve Müdafaam, 24.
- 71. M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, Young Turks in Opposition, 211.
- 72. Kayalı, Arabs and Young Turks, 9.
- 73. Erik J. Zürcher, The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building, 230.
- 74. Erol Ülker, "Contextualising 'Turkification."
- 75. Feroz Ahmad, The Young Turks, 16.
- 76. Şerif Mardin, The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought.
- 77. Yavuz, "The Balkan Wars as a Catalyst of Homogenization," 78.
- 78. Zafer Toprak, Milli İktisat—Milli Burjuvazi.
- 79. Niyazi Berkes, The Development of Secularism in Turkey, 329.
- 80. M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire.
- 81. Karen Barkey's Empire of Difference argues that the tolerance and nonassimilation policy of the Ottoman Empire was a necessity to institutionalize the territorial integrity of the state.
- 82. Zürcher, The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building.
- 83. Yusuf Akçura, Üç Tarz-ı Siyaset.

Nationalism in Function

"Rebellions" in the Ottoman Empire and Narratives in Its Absence

Ramazan Hakkı Öztan

Scholars have recently begun to highlight the lingering attachment to the Ottoman Empire and its power arrangements as an important quality of the pre– and post–World War I Middle East. Fascinating contributions come from numerous scholars who emphasize the Greeks, Jews, Albanians, and Arabs with their continuing attachments to the Ottoman arrangements even after the collapse of the imperial order (I could add western Armenians to the list, but no separate study yet exists).¹ According to Vangelis Kechriotis, this amounted to a "historiographical discourse…that focuses on the loyalty of the non-Muslims to the Ottomanist ideal, instead of the treacherous character of their revolutionary movements."² This emerging corpus of works thus highlights the necessity to question essentialist understanding of nationalism as a matter of *inevitable* and *natural* ethnic alignments on the broader political map.

We may be inclined to interpret this recent scholarly preoccupation as an unconscious attempt to romanticize the Ottoman past and to see this romanticization as a reflection of scholarly discontent about the ways in which the secular nation-states that replaced Ottoman rule failed to extend prosperity, peace, and stability to the wider social segments in the modern Middle East. This reaction is not entirely groundless. For example, Michelle Campos's study on the civic Ottomanism that cut across ethnic and religious lines in late Ottoman Palestine ended by noting that "a shared civic project and a shared homeland, though short-lived and incomplete, could not be more relevant to the present historical moment." Although this pattern of scholarship involves some sense of romanticization, I see it as a result of an emerging critical attitude to the documents

produced by the Western and Ottoman bureaucratic machineries of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, coupled with an increasing desire to question the postwar teleological nationalist constructions of history.

The bureaucratic demarcations of ethnic categories, often embedded in official documents in clear-cut terms, fail to capture the complexity of human realities and the sources of their discontent. This is not much of a surprise, though: as a peculiar quality of modern state bureaucracies, bureaucratic categories denote "a common measure of fact, a universal conceptual currency...for the general characterization of things," as Ernest Gellner notes.⁵ These categories are important for academics and bureaucrats alike in rendering historical and contemporary complexities more legible. Thus, in an attempt to render the immediate complexity legible, the documents of modern states assume coherence in ethnic categorizations and then embark upon calculating their course of action. This is a necessary component of the way in which bureaucratic rationality functions and, interestingly, how it often fails. But this mode, peculiar to modern times, tells very little about actual human subjects whose conceptual map was still defined by "the co-existence...of multiple, not properly united, but hierarchically related sub-worlds."8 Studying the nature of bureaucratic calculations is an effort in and of itself, rewarding in explaining the contours of diplomatic history as well as in analyzing the workings of modern states and most importantly very relevant to understanding the reactions of state elites to the events unfolding before their eyes. In the end these bureaucrats also interpreted the world around them through these filters and took action that was informed by such categories. Yet these categories do not automatically capture complex historical developments, what actually took place on the ground, and what motivated humans as individuals and as members of communities in their actions.

The lines between academics and bureaucrats continue to be blurry in today's epistemic community, because both use categories to make sense of the past and present. The duty of a historian, however, is not only to present historical complexity but also to show how bureaucratic conduct (as in nationalist narratives) and scholarship (as in various disciplines) came to fix meanings to the past. Integral to these mappings of history with fixed edges is overemphasis on strict causality in historical progress, which often comes at the expense of pragmatism in the state's conduct, and the role of unintended consequences in historical development. This study accordingly approaches categorizations and teleology with greater

caution, be they nationalist/bureaucratic or academic. In this sense it is necessary, as Christine Philliou notes, not to "look *back*, from the Turkish nation-state, from the modern Middle East or Balkans" when analyzing the nineteenth-century Ottoman world.¹⁰ In the same spirit Karen Barkey preaches against this teleology in an attempt to understand the "possibilities" of the empire.¹¹

Avoiding a teleological perspective based upon a priori knowledge of the end of the empire, 12 this chapter tries to provide a framework on how to read the late Ottoman period in the absence of teleological nationalist and bureaucratic readings. One way to do this is by showing the fluidity of identities at the end of the empire through studies that focus on the provinces-showcasing how the common people in fact lacked ethnic unity and were instead divided or unified by local aspirations and loyalties. In this sense fluidity of identities essentially suggests that ethnic belonging did not necessarily result in nationalist conduct in the late Ottoman world. Another way to avoid conditioning historical analysis on the collapse of the empire is by showing the continuing attachments of Ottoman leaders to the broader project of conserving and maintaining the empire even in the last years of the Great War (as done by Kayalı in chapter 45 in this volume). All in all this literature tries to reconstruct the late Ottoman period in the absence of a teleological approach, whether nationalist or bureaucratic in format. This chapter is an attempt to contribute to this broader project in two ways.

The first section below provides a short survey, with comparative perspectives, of some rebellions across the Ottoman world that led to the emergence of nation-states. These rebellions throughout the nineteenth century were nationalist only in function. In fact each of these rebellions highlights the fluidity of identities and unyielding attachments to the status quo on the everyday level among the Ottoman populations. It was the breakdown of these arrangements that created unrest across the Ottoman world, creating instances that we often deem nationalist. In this sense people were neither nationalists nor ideological Ottomans but "practical Ottomans" with attachments to the Ottoman arrangements around them. This section self-consciously juxtaposes instances of rejection of the imperial system with instances of consent in an attempt to break the cycle of seeing the empires "as prisons of nations." ¹³

The second section is a similar attempt informed by comparative perspectives to read late Ottoman history through the analytic category of official Ottoman nationalism, which was essentially a pragmatic worldview of empire preservation in response to the foreign-backed rebellions

analyzed in the first section of the chapter. This section starts off with a rereading of Yusuf Akçura's *Üç Tarz-ı Siyaset* (Three Types of Policy), with particular emphasis on Ahmed Ferit's response to Akçura. Akçura's trilogy has often served the existing literature as the backbone of teleological explanations for the transition from empire to nation-state, with clear phases from a cosmopolitan Ottomanism to Islamism and finally to an ethnocentric Turkish nationalism. By incorporating Ahmed Ferit's problematization of the notion of Ottomanism, I argue that Ottomanism had multiple meanings and applications. It was at times a cosmopolitan attitude and at times an assimilationist one. Therefore I present Ottoman official nationalism as a better conceptual category that is nonteleological, analytically inclusive, and more reflective of the pragmatism that characterized the late Ottoman policy makers.

The third section examines the extent, reason, and patterns of policy variations in the Ottoman Empire under the leadership of the Young Turks after the 1908 revolution. In doing so I cast doubts on analytically restrictive frameworks such as "Turkification" and advocate more conceptually inclusive approaches to explain the Second Constitutional period.

WILLING NATIONALISTS, RELUCTANT "NATION": SCRAMBLE FOR THE EMPIRE

Through sustained narrative nationalism reappropriates the historical instances that were instrumental in the emergence of its conditions. According to this narrative, the events that led to the creation of the nationstate featured the whole-hearted struggle of a unified ethnicity. This is a projection backward of the "myth of the nation-as-family" that, for example, emerged forcefully in its Turkish setting: the national hero was given the surname Atatürk (father of the Turks) in 1934. 14 Describing the events as such with a popular support base has a clear function in legitimizing the necessity to introduce and sustain the new nationalist ideals and to erode the earlier imperial arrangements. In different incarnations this exact narrative was adopted as state propaganda in the successors to imperial states, where continuities were blurred in historical analyses and ruptures were embraced. From a comparative angle, for instance, "the waves of desertions that hit the Russian army in 1917 were not among the Polish officers. Rather, deserters were primarily [Russian] peasants." ¹⁵ The continuing Polish loyalty to the tsarist arrangements, while the Russian peasants fled the service for motives of personal gain back home,

suggests interesting historical instances that were only given voice at the margins of nationalist historiographies. While Polish loyalties pose some serious questions as to the fluidity of ethnic identities and how imagined ethnic ties failed to direct human actors in predictable ways, the issue of Russian desertions lies elsewhere. James Scott notes that these individual instances of desertion, often disdained as acts not informed by ideological consistency but rather in pursuit of personal advantage, not only undermined the ability of the tsarist government to quell the socialist uprising but also speeded up the socialist land seizures. ¹⁶

The Russian example is rather illustrative of the impact of individual acts once they create an aggregate effect. It is clear that those peasants who deserted from the Russian ranks acted not ideologically but practically. More importantly, the result of their uncoordinated actions contributed significantly to the Russian Revolution of 1917. Similarly, the rebellions in the late Ottoman period that led to the emergence of nation-states featured participation that cannot be reduced to the ideology of nationalism. Accordingly, any study focusing on this period needs to address the following two issues. First, it must explain the loyal service of those belonging to other ethnic groups in the bureaucracies, parliaments, and armies of the imperial structures. From tsarist Russia to the Habsburgs and the Ottomans, imperial bureaucracies contained multiethnic representation and support until the end of each imperial framework. Second, it must account for the antinationalist acts of the members of the ethnic group that was supposedly waging a war of national liberation. In the end scores of desertions and outright lack of cooperation on the part of those who were liberated often characterize the period during and after the wars of liberation in every setting.

The period from the early 1820s to the early 1830s when an independent Greece was created is a case in point. When the rebellion broke out in 1821, the goal was to create a Byzantine state with Greek leadership, at the expense of the Ottomans. ¹⁷ Yet the following ten-year period that ended with the emergence of an independent Greece and the decades immediately after independence highlighted the larger theme that nationalist struggles were to be fought by resorting not necessarily to the imagined nation but rather to the Great Powers. From 1821 to 1825 the leadership of the Greek insurrection was divided, often punctuated by struggles between military and civilian factions over who would actually control the emerging state institutions. When a provincial governor from the diaspora was appointed in 1827, his failure to bridge the cleavage

between the local power holders and his aspirations led to his assassination in 1831. He was replaced by the Bavarian-born King Otto, who would employ Bavarians as his loyal servants in the state bureaucracy.¹⁸

The lack of a uniform political leadership as well as a direct foreign role in appointing the new leaders in a way paralleled the larger contours of the situation on the ground. Throughout the course of the struggle against the Ottomans it was the Greek bandits (some of whom had been recognized by the Ottoman state in return for their help in bringing stability to the bandit-ridden region) who provided significant numbers of fighters in the Greek war of liberation. 19 The struggle included the Greek peasants-turned-militias who not only attacked Muslim villages but also attacked their fellow Christians. Some accounts suggest that a good number of those who fought were Albanians on both the Greek and Ottoman/Egyptian side, thus fighting against each other. Financial support for the Greek struggle largely came from abroad rather than from Greek communities elsewhere in the Ottoman Empire.²⁰ As a matter of fact, while the Greek war of liberation drew political and financial support from the Great Powers, high-ranking and influential Greek politicians in the Ottoman Empire like Stefanaki Bey supported the Sublime Porte against such aspirations.²¹ Stephanos Vogorides, another product of the system of Ottoman governance, was also opposed to the nationalists and called them apostates, including his revolutionary brother, Athanasios.²²

When the Greek war of liberation in 1825 was greatly threatened by the coming of the forces led by Ibrahim Paşa, the son of Muhammad Ali of Egypt, the struggle only succeeded thanks to foreign intervention. The Allies reacted as late as October 1827, having finally calculated a way of not upsetting the dynamics of balance of power vis-à-vis Russia while showing sympathy toward the Christian Greek cause. Their intervention, however late, dealt a decisive blow to the Egyptian-Ottoman fleet in the Bay of Navarino, where the Ottoman ships that had Greek sailors on board were sunk.²³ As for the bandits who fought on the Greek side against the Ottomans, some of them crossed the border back to the Ottoman territories after their victory, running away from new nationalist schemes. Some other bandits continued to operate under the Bavarian regime, causing disturbances and gaining concessions, and refused to be included in the new regular national army.²⁴ This is reminiscent of, say, Bosnian resistance to the Ottoman schemes of conscription after the elimination of the Janissary corps. 25 After the eventual dethronement of King Otto in 1862, a Danish prince, George I, took the Greek throne. This pattern of appointing a member of the European royalty in search

for stability in newly independent states continued in later decades, wittily summarized in August 1923 by a London newspaper in the case of Albania: "Wanted, a King: English country gentleman preferred." The discussions had taken place in European diplomatic circles since the 1910s to appoint a king to Albania, whether Christian or Muslim, but a person with royal lineage. Accordingly, Wilhelm zu Wied, a German prince, became the prince of Albania yet only remained on the throne for six months. His rule proved ineffective in stabilizing the country in the midst of domestic unrest and regional rivalry. 8

This political history of the fledgling Greek state, described here in broad strokes, clearly complicates the assumed symbiotic relationship between ethnicity and nationalism. The position of the Greeks remaining within the Ottoman realms provides no clarity either. The Greeks fell from favor in the Ottoman bureaucracy after 1821, as is clear from the dismissal of the Greek dragomans after the rebellion of their compatriots,²⁹ only to be replaced by Armenians and some other converted Christians. 30 Their fall from Ottoman grace was also clear in the purges of the Phanariot community in the capital, leading to the murder of Orthodox patriarch of Constantinople in 1821. Yet the Ottoman Greeks were later able to repair their relations with the Porte and continued to have significant representation in various professions as well as in the bureaucracy. By the 1830s, for instance, Constantine Musurus was appointed as governor of the island of Samos. 31 In 1840 he was appointed as the first ambassador to independent Greece and was attacked by his co-religionists.³² After a brief stint in Vienna, he became the ambassador to London, where he represented the Ottoman Empire from 1851 to 1885. The Ottoman representative to the Berlin Congress in 1878 was another Phanariot, Karatheodori Paşa.³³ By 1912 the Greeks accounted for 52 percent of physicians and architects, 37 percent of engineers, and 29 percent of lawyers, followed by Armenians and Turks. Their representation increased steadily in the bureaucracy until 1882. Greeks and Armenians served the Ottoman state as ambassadors and ministers as well as filling other senior and junior positions. In the more rural areas the Greeks took the lead in agriculture in western Anatolia and the Armenians in the east.³⁴ Çağlar Keyder notes that "for this nascent bourgeoisie, a separatist nationalism did not hold much attraction."35

A move away from a more case-specific study to broader developments in the late Ottoman period highlights the commonalities that the Greek example shared with other "independence" movements. In general the insurrections-turned-wars of national liberations have their roots in local economic factors instead of an awakened nationalist zeal, only to be hijacked by the nationalists. In the Serbian case it was "the excesses of the local Janissary garrisons" that incited an insurrection in 1804. ³⁶ After the restoration of the Ottoman power over Serbia in 1813 and the granting of autonomy two years later, Miloš Obrenović rose to prominence and consolidated his power over the Paşalık. He killed his Serbian rivals—interestingly—in cooperation with the Ottomans, ³⁷ who continued to garrison the towns in this autonomous zone. ³⁸ The Serbian insurrection, born out of the failure of the Ottoman state to maintain the "legal protections for life and property," was also replicated elsewhere, as in 1821 in Wallachia and Morea and in the 1890s in eastern Anatolia. ³⁹

While the Ottoman state had a record of competence in managing diverse and mixed populations in many regions of the imperial realm, ⁴⁰ many instances of conflict occurred in localities where it utterly failed to manage the sources of discontent. These conflicts at times had clear Christian and Muslim undertones and drew nationalist agitators from abroad. While some level of awareness of ethnic identities among the general population existed (albeit limited to their local encounters), 41 these identities did not transform into a call for separation from the Ottoman state for the majority of the population, whether Christian or Muslim. In fact "most resident Christians saw greater hope for the future in avoiding acts of rebellion that brought a very real risk of death or absolute ruin."42 For the nationalist agitators who either were mostly from the diaspora or were stationed on the Ottoman borders, in contrast, "there [was] a state to gain and little to lose in acquiring it." ⁴³ Illustrative of this process was Comrade Panchoonie, the infamous fictional revolutionary in Yervant Odian's contemporary satire: "We are like sextons,' he [Panchoonie] would say frequently. 'We ring the church bells and persuade others to go to church, while we ourselves remain outside." ⁴⁴ The troubles in the Balkans in the 1870s in general and the Bulgarian uprisings in late April and early May 1876 in particular highlight some of these points and the significance of Western responses in turning violent local clashes into broader regional conflicts.

The uprisings across the Balkans had economic undertones, only later having turned into a staple of European politics. The years 1873 and 1874 were marked by drought and floods throughout Asia Minor. Coupled with the beginnings of the Great Economic Depression in Europe that would last from 1873 to 1896,⁴⁵ the Ottoman Empire also lost its ability to compensate for the loss of tax revenue with foreign loans. Furthermore, a crucial portion of the empire's revenue (a quarter, to be precise)

came from the agricultural production of cereals. The growing American output of wheat to the world market in the next two decades led to sharp declines in wheat prices by 60 percent, resulting in significant decrease of tax revenue in the Ottoman Empire. 46 The corresponding increase of taxation in the Balkans led to the emergence of peasant revolts in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1875 and in Bulgaria the following year.⁴⁷ Similar events occurred in the early 1870s in Zeytun.⁴⁸ Although they are centuries apart, the economic crisis of the 1870s, rooted in unfavorable climactic conditions, was rather similar to the Jalali rebellions in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, when climactic fluctuations also seem to have played an important part in the outbreak of the rebellion and the subsequent inability of the empire to co-opt the rebels.⁴⁹ While the peasant revolts in Bosnia and Herzegovina had broader appeal, the April uprisings in Bulgaria in 1876, although more limited in scope, received much diplomatic and scholarly attention. The uprising was suppressed by the Bulgarian Muslims (Pomaks), who shared the same ethnicity with the Christians. Furthermore, according to a report by Walter Baring, who was sent to the region as the British investigator, "the principal instigators came entirely from abroad, and without foreign intrigue no revolution would have broken out...I believe the majority of the respectable Bulgarians took no real part in it."50 Even though anti-Ottoman biases, framed in essentialist language, dominated these accounts, the constant reference to the lack of a Bulgarian base in these rebellions is striking. Although it is not possible to overlook some instances of massacres, the conflict was often locality-specific. Yet the diplomatic reports exaggerated the nature of the Ottoman destruction of the Bulgarians to such an extent that the emerging numbers (12,000-15,000) widely accepted in the West were contradicted by the accounts written by Westerners with more knowledge of the region. They put the number at less than 4,000 a figure that also took into account the impact of seasonal agricultural migrations in the region.⁵¹ The point of Western exaggeration becomes clear in the case of Batak, where the extent of the massacres as described by Western observers was far larger than what the Bulgarian participants themselves had suggested in the first place.⁵²

In the end the insurrection did not pose any significant threat to the Ottoman Empire in military terms until the "Christianity" of the rebels created an anti-Ottoman and pro-Christian public opinion in Western capitals, not unrelated to domestic political quarrels. This resulted in eventual Russian intervention. In the words of Ivan Vazov, a famous Bulgarian nationalist/literary figure at the time, "if she [Providence] gave

us Batak, she also gave us Alexander II."⁵³ As noted by Philip Smith, the apocalyptic nature of the emerging narrative and rhetoric is often what precedes and accompanies foreign interventions.⁵⁴ Interestingly, such interventions (whether in the nineteenth century or later throughout the twentieth century) shared the same paradigm and modus operandi.⁵⁵ Thus realities on the ground mattered less when the Ottoman Empire was challenged with an apocalyptic narrative that led to intervention. And it paid off well. As Kemal Karpat duly notes, "[t]he events in the Balkans in 1877–78 showed how easy it was for any ethnic group which had the support of one of the European powers to uproot and chase away another ethnic or religious group and establish its own political domination."⁵⁶

Yet, whether Christian or Muslim, the larger populations continued to be rather skeptical of those who asked them to wake up from their centuries-long "slumber." As illustrated in peasant encounters with the forces of capitalism, the prospect of a better future was often received by the peasants with suspicion. It mattered little whether this future was framed in nationalist or capitalist vocabularies. In James Scott's study the peasants made a rational choice (perhaps irrational by today's standards) by rejecting the new modes of capitalist agriculture that could possibly yield a greater surplus. They instead opted for the subsistence security of the old agrarian order and its relatively safer agricultural techniques that provided stability, steady but minimal yield, and safety networks in times of crisis—such as the tacit agreement in the village community on the principle of reciprocity—and also less reliable but still optional safety arrangements embedded in patron-client relations and the interactions with the state.⁵⁷ The lack of a radical vision among the South Asian peasantry was also paralleled in Europe throughout the nineteenth century, where the workers made modest claims to a right to subsistence instead of the claims reflecting more radical visions.

We could also extend such lack of radical vision among the South Asian peasantry or Western working class to the Middle Eastern urban topography. Borrowing Edward Thompson's terminology, Edmund Burke III argued that the Middle East had an Islamic moral economy where urban protests followed a well-known pattern in an attempt to reach out to the government and demand the basic rights of subsistence, as was particularly clear in bread riots. Thus urban unrest and rural uprisings occurred when this basic principle was breached. The protesters, however, also knew the limits of what the Ottoman state could provide for them.⁵⁸ What defined these limits in state-society interactions, as is

clear in historic manifestations of the Islamic moral economy in the early modern and modern eras, was the notion of the circle of justice as well as the pact of Umar—a set of discursive principles that came to regulate the relationship between the Ottoman state and its subjects in broad terms.⁵⁹

Thus, as capitalism and imperialism from the nineteenth century onward penetrated into the region more strongly than ever, the protests in many different settings continued to call for the restoration of the old order. When the unrest took on the characteristics of an intercommunal fight (as in the case of Aleppo in 1850), the target was the perceived beneficiaries of the capitalist penetrations, who were often Christian. But the articulation of which Christian neighborhood to loot reflected calculations that went beyond a simple assertion of a Muslim and Christian divide—let alone an ethnic one.⁶⁰ This is rather similar to the calculated reactions of the artisans in the imperial capital to the bourgeoning consumer economy of the Age of Tulips (1703–30), which came to an end when the artisans under the leadership of Patrona Halil destroyed the symbolic bases of the new order (mansions and tulip gardens)—actions that suggested "a broader social bent to restore Istanbul's 'moral economy.'"⁶¹

In the most general sense, then, nationalist activists in the late Ottoman Empire had very limited public appeal. The broader populations were suspicious of those who asked for radical change. Conflicts that were locality-specific and rooted in legitimate concerns that the Ottoman state had failed to address became opportune moments that drew the nationalists into the picture, where they often "only succeeded in lengthening their record of futility in igniting the flames of widespread nationalist revolution." Perhaps the most tragic example was the Sasun rebellion of 1894, when the Armenian Hunchak revolutionaries from abroad failed to initiate broad-scale liberation of western Armenian compatriots. This was so because as late as 1915, when the Zeytun Affair took place, the Ottoman authorities continued to note that the majority of Ottoman Armenians were disturbed by the activities of "an insignificant few" and that Armenians' "devotion to the fatherland is beyond any doubt."

Thus in various instances of local conflicts that attracted the nationalists Europe intervened to come to the rescue of the liberators, aiding them in making the state—the state, that is, which could later make the nation. Even when independence was gained in the aftermath of European interventions, however, the practical attachment to the old Ottoman arrangements continued unabashedly. Several irregular bands from

the [Greek] war of independence," wrote Karabelias, "were still menacing the country and their leaders as well as local primates did not seem happy with the idea of giving up their traditional sources of financial, political and military power for *an unfamiliar national government* beyond their control."

Such examples are drawn from diverse Christian communities in the empire, but the case is not that different for the Ottoman Muslims. Some Albanians, for instance, whether they were located in the highlands of Albania or in the diaspora, did not imagine or wish for a future separate from the Ottomans.⁶⁷ The earlier manifestations of Albanian unrest such as the rebellion in 1910 had their roots in local problems that the Ottoman local officials made worse and the central Ottoman government failed to address. 68 As for the eventual Albanian independence, it "was an assertion made chiefly against the Balkan states and not in opposition to the Ottoman presence."69 Individuals like the Albanian intellectual Ibrahim Themo (Temo) still subscribed to Ottoman unity, only to be disdained by later Albanian nationalists.⁷⁰ Most of the Arab populations of the empire were similarly disinterested in the so-called Arab revolt. One of the principal British agents in the region, the infamous T. E. Lawrence, "pointed to a string of geographical, cultural, racial, linguistic and religious divergencies and 'no national feeling' at all"—a position that Lawrence spelled out early in 1915, only to strengthen it years later.⁷¹

Thus the late Ottoman Empire contained many nationalists who articulated different futures for their respective imagined communities. Like other nationalists they were "full of warm and generous ardor on behalf of the co-nationals."⁷² They were also aware of the acute problem of the lack of national consciousness among the wider population. The nationalists, often with their base abroad, regarded the empire as the prison of the nation and tried to capitalize on instances of locally rooted unrest that the Ottoman Empire failed to address. In the Balkans, as we have seen, these "self-appointed 'national' leaders" were able to carve their prospective nation out of the Ottoman Empire thanks to the European nation-state promotion and corresponding foreign interventions.⁷³ But what about the Muslim-Turkish populations and Ottoman elite who were at the receiving end of the Western scramble for the empire? How did they express themselves in the late Ottoman world, where ethnic identity did not necessarily determine subscription to a nationalist camp? The younger generations who were educated under the Hamidian regime but became disaffected by its policies found their revolutionary laboratory in Macedonia, which was yet another theater of European-sponsored partition. This time it was these young Ottoman officers who capitalized on a conflict in the periphery to stage their schemes of restoration.

Empires in Europe and elsewhere that ruled over multiethnic, multilinguistic, and multireligious communities responded to the rise of linguistic and religious nationalisms since the 1820s through a similar, albeit not uniform, formulation of an official nationalism that would function as a supranational identity and accordingly co-opt nationalist currents. The Ottoman response, formulated by its own bureaucrats and intelligentsia, was no different. Those communities that were at the end of the Ottoman measures had protection and backing abroad, however, minimizing the Ottoman state's capacity for coercion (and thus success of integration/assimilation) and accordingly forcing its ruling elite to bargain and negotiate with diverse political factions, whether revolutionary or of the ancien régime. In the end those who were at the helm of the empire neither constituted a monolithic ruling class nor were isolated from the developments in the world around them.

OTTOMAN OFFICIAL NATIONALISM: SOCIOPOLITICAL MOBILITY AND MODERNIZATION

In form like a policy paper, Yusuf Akçura's highly influential Uç Tarz-i Siyaset (Three Types of Policy), published in 1904 in the journal Türk in Cairo, examines the three routes that the Ottoman Empire could take to strengthen its position in the international arena: Ottomanism, Islamism, and Turkism. Akçura interpreted Ottomanism as the policy of the Tanzimat, the product of Ali Paşa and Fuad Paşa, who had copied it from France under the helm of Napoleon III. The policy died out accordingly in the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–71, in which the French armies were defeated. After this experiment Islamism was picked up in the later years of the reign of Abdülaziz I, only to showcase its best application during the rule of Abdülhamid II. Against this backdrop Akçura highlighted irredentist Turkism and Islamism as important policy alternatives, while also admitting the complications that they would involve.

Although Akçura's evaluation of the three policies on an abstract level continues to yield some level of clarification, his periodization of late Ottoman history through the prism of the three policies as well as the inherent clear-cut teleology in his account have blurred the complexity of the late Ottoman intellectual and political climate. His articulation and subsequent dismissal of the idea of Ottomanism is a case in point.

For him, Ottomanism was an attempt at giving equal rights and duties to all citizens irrespective of religious affiliation—just as in the case of the United States ("Amerika Hükümet-i Müttehidesindeki Amerikan milleti gibi"). The was this abstract and ideational take by Akçura on the late Ottoman intellectual currents that generated significant responses from his contemporaries.

Immediately after the publication of Akçura's work, two responses appeared in the journal *Türk*: first Ali Kemal's "Cevabimiz" (Our Answer) and second Ahmed Ferit (Tek)'s "Bir Mektup" (A Letter). Ali Kemal dismissed Akçura's articulation of Ottomanism as lacking proper historical understanding. As for Akçura's evaluation of Islamism and Turkism, Ali Kemal noted that the Ottoman Empire had difficulty protecting the Muslims and Turks within its own borders; how could it defend and unite others scattered all around the globe?⁷⁸ Instead of wasting time on such useless schemes, Ali Kemal argued that it was much more important to put emphasis on individual development and progress. In the face of such a liberal critique, Ahmed Ferit published his "Bir Mektup." A friend of Akçura, he was exiled to Tripolitania after the 1897 Hamidian purges of the opposition fermenting among the students in various schools that trained technocrats for the state service; he was later a participant in the February 1902 congress of the Ottoman opposition. 79 Ahmed Ferit's article, a response to both Akçura and Ali Kemal, argued that Ottomanism had not died. In fact it was the best route to take for the ruling elites. Turkism and Islamism were only complementary tools that assisted in the larger purpose of keeping the empire intact and strengthening its hand in the midst of the struggle for survival ("cidal-1 hayatda").80

Ahmed Ferit attributed an inherent integrationist/assimilationist quality to Ottomanism, contrary to the civic nature that Akçura attributed to it. This integrationist/assimilationist strand of Ottomanism was particularly clear when Ahmed Ferit evaluated the reforms of the Tanzimat. According to him, the Ottoman Empire had carried out diverse policies in an attempt to contain and control various Ottoman communities. One method was civic political representation, an important means of containing the millets. It was also important to subjugate and control the heads of the various millets, a policy that had already been spelled out in the Hatt-i Humayun of 1856. Another measure that the Ottoman state implemented, Ahmed Ferit argued, was the carefully calculated move to settle the incoming *muhacirs* (settlers) from Russia, Crete, and Bosnia into sectors of the society with larger non-Muslim representation, in an attempt to balance them out demographically.⁸¹ He

also noted that Ottoman legislation tried to control various non-Muslim schools and to impose Turkish language on the non-Muslims, as was clear in the Maarif Nizamnamesi of 1869. Such measures found their constitutional renderings in the Kanun-i Esasi in 1876 in articles 6, 16, and 18. If any millet succeeded in resisting these schemes of integration, Ferit foresaw, no other solution would remain but to encourage, if possible, their resettlement to foreign countries ("o milletin ecanibe muhaceratını teşvik"). If their resettlement was not possible, that nation was a candidate for independence. 83

Such Ottomanist measures clearly surfaced in Ahmed Ferit's work as attempts at containing separatist nationalisms in the Ottoman Empire. This culturally assimilationist strand essentially aimed at creating an imperial polity that would have equal access to the Ottoman officialdom regardless of ethnicity and religion, while creating and maintaining social cohesion and unity of purpose on the ground. In this regard neither the Ottomanism of the Tanzimat nor the Ottomanism of the Second Constitutional period was "cosmopolitan."84 Both versions targeted acculturation and assimilation, while the latter was more forceful in its implementation. Şükrü Hanioğlu highlighted this when he framed the CUP's policies as "aggressive Ottomanism." 85 This policy was not ethnocentric but national, I argue, as its notion of ruling nation highlighted the qualities of imperial polity as having uniformity of cultural codes but not of ethnic markers. It was centralizing, modernizing, and illiberal and nationalist only in function, not in design or practice, because its implementation created the groundwork for subsequent attempts of building the nation under the Turkish Republic.

Let us consider the British example of the early nineteenth century in an attempt to shed some light on the notion of the millet-i hakime and its place in the overall supranational frameworks in general and Ottomanism in particular. "A thoroughly English educational system was to be introduced that, in Thomas Macaulay's ineffable words, would create 'a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinion, in morals and in intellect." Here the word-for-word parallel with Ahmed Ferit's argument is rather striking. Ferit pointed out that "in the language of politics, representation is to assimilate the rest of the population to the *religion*, morals, and conscience of the dominant nation" ("Temsil, lisan-1 siyaside, millet-i hakimenin gayri ahaliyi *dinen*, lisanen, ahlaken, vicdanen millet-i hakimeye benzetmekdir"). ⁸⁷ For contemporaries like Ahmed Ferit who argued for official nationalism, integrationist and assimilationist steps were attempts at strengthening the Ottoman

state by way of creating loyal and patriotic citizens. This was framed with the notion of millet-i hakime, which highlighted the cultural codes of the imperial polity while marginalizing other ethnic, linguistic, and religious identities in the empire and allowing them to exist as long as the members of these communities expressed utter loyalty. This set of notions characterized the subsequent Unionist conduct as well. Thus from the Tanzimat period until the collapse of the empire Ottomanism only varied in its degree of implementation. In the Unionist years it was pursued the most aggressively.

In this sense the notion and practice of constitutionalism by its very nature would reduce confessional and religious identities to irrelevance; any identity markers that suggest otherwise were to be avoided in political discourse. 89 Accordingly, when Ahmed Ferit talked about linguistic assimilation into Turkish, for instance, he framed it not as the language of the Turkish people but rather as the language of the state ("lisan-1 hükümet").90 In other words, this language did not express an ethnic orientation per se but rather was "universal and imperial," as was characteristic of an official nationalism. 91 This universal and imperial language would be the language of bureaucracy and thus the criterion for meritbased upward social mobility (the rewards that were to be collected once someone went through a modernized education).⁹² In this regard article 18 of the Ottoman constitution (Kanun-i Esasi, 1876)—the article that was spared in the constitutional amendments spearheaded by the CUP in 1909—is rather telling: "the knowledge of the official language of the state, Turkish, is a prerequisite for all Ottoman subjects to be employed in state service."93 The function of the official language of the state as a means of upward social mobility cannot be overemphasized within the broader framework of official nationalisms.

Yet, typical of the official nationalisms during the nineteenth century, those who went through such a process of assimilation into the imperial polity through merit-based upward mobility (including but not limited to language skills), whether Japanified Koreans or Anglicized Indians, were likely to be denied equal access to the higher offices in the metropole. This issue also helps explain why official nationalisms often came to fail. That was precisely the case for the Ottomanism of the Tanzimat. As a contemporary, Ahmed Ferit noted that Ottomanism did not find a full-fledged application during the Tanzimat and did not yield the intended results ("bu ihtimamların neticesi, semeresi tamamen iktitaf olunamadı"). Carter Findley's analysis of Ottomanism painted a similar picture. Historicizing the application of Ottomanism in four major areas

of Ottoman officialdom, Findley argued that the purchase of exemptions from universal military service by non-Muslims became institutionalized; "bureaucratization of the non-Muslim religious leadership does not appear to have been considered"; and the non-Muslim presence and service was rather limited in the Ottoman palace. Only the civil bureaucracy had a more markedly non-Muslim presence, albeit not without serious variations in differing branches of the bureaucracy as well as clear limitations in center/periphery representation—a negative picture by today's standards yet a positive one given its era of implementation. 96 Hinting at the proportions of Hamidian neopatrimonial policies, Nader Sohrabi recently argued that "blocked mobility" was the direct cause of the Young Turk revolution of 1908.⁹⁷ Accordingly, I suggest that the revolution had a corrective function, attempting to restore the Ottoman official nationalism at full force, with its emphasis on bureaucratic perfection, cultural assimilation into the imperial polity, and interventionist measures of modernization to inculcate loyalty on the ground.

For the Young Turks, then, "constitutional states were the most streamlined, merit-based, rational, indeed 'scientific' systems." 98 In this light it is no surprise to see that the architects of the Young Turk revolution of 1908 were themselves the product of Hamidian modern education, an irony that is often noted in scholarship. Being denied access to higher office and promotions—barred from the metropole as a result of the neopatrimonial administrative policies of the Hamidian regime—the Young Turks were the manifestation of common frustration at the incomplete application of Ottoman official nationalism. 99 In this sense they represented the urban middle class that emerged thanks to the Tanzimat reforms during the nineteenth century. 100 They felt anger toward the lack of equality and freedom in the Hamidian society, policies (or lack thereof) that were leading the empire to a collapse and scramble at the hands of European powers. 101 To save the empire from disintegration, the primary goals of the revolutionaries, tellingly, were to dismantle the neopatrimonialism of the Hamidian regime and create a rational bureaucracy, introduce legal equality, and target political integration through a legislative chamber that would have "brought the dissatisfied non-Muslim elements into the Ottoman fold and deprived the nationalists of an excuse to revolt." 102 These domestic measures would strengthen the hand of the Ottoman state on the world stage and make the schemes of material progress meaningful at home. All these steps would serve to minimize the prospects of foreign intervention in the Ottoman realms. Calculations of the Young Turk revolutionaries on the eve of 1908 reflected this cautionary take.

They knew from the experience of the First Constitutional period that "any appearance of chaos served as an excuse for intervention, the return of despotism, or both." Accordingly, after the revolution of 1908, the CUP would begin taking steps toward the Ottoman official nationalism that would dismantle the neopatrimonial structures of the Hamidian regime. Only later would they push for building an interventionist state at home, as is clear in the subsequent legislation that they tried to champion in an attempt to create legal grounds for modernizing and assimilationist state acts. In the end transformation would occur not through the sword but by shaping individual and collective consciousness (*dimağ*) through such modernizing acts. ¹⁰⁴

At this time "the Ottoman political elite's ideology was first and foremost modernist," which targeted the creation of a sovereign modernstate, economically and politically. 105 The Young Turks' belief in the transformative power of modernization as generating political legitimacy and popular loyalty on the ground had parallels elsewhere, such as in the Third Republic in France. This example is often cited not because it was necessarily the norm of modernization per se but because it was clearly the most extensively studied. 106 France was relevant to the Ottoman elites early on because "[t]he Tanzimat period and the Hamidian era had witnessed the transformation of administrative and educational institutions along European, particularly French, lines—in other words, the modernization of the devlet [state]."107 While the Hamidian regime created the most rational bureaucracy ever established in the empire by that time, which was never acknowledged in the anti-Hamidian propaganda, the Unionists wanted to bring the Ottoman bureaucracy to perfection by dismantling the Hamidian neopatrimonial structure, 108 which they regarded as a deviation from the principles of Ottomanism. Accordingly the CUP began delivering on its promises immediately after the revolution through purges and demotions in the bureaucracy, whether civil or military, "without legislative backing," thus lending relevance to the common accusation that the committee's center and local branches functioned as a "government within the government." ¹⁰⁹ The legal framework for purges came only after the Tensikat legislation on July 1, 1909, little short of a year after the revolution. 110 The eventual transformation of the committee into a political party happened much later at the 1913 congress of the CUP, when the disparity between the committee and the political organ (the source of the allegations of "government within government") had little relevance. The political arena was to be dominated by the one-party rule of the CUP until late 1918.111

While the bureaucratic rupture began taking shape in the first year of the revolution, the broader mentality of modernization was persistent through the late Ottoman era and thus could not be seen as the monopoly of the Unionists. Mehmet Tevfik Bey (Biren), for instance, who served under Abdülhamid II but was spared in the bureaucratic purges in the post-1908 era, had a clear belief in the state-sponsored acts of social change like many of his contemporaries. His autobiography, which is the most detailed one among the autobiographies of his peers, 112 provides some interesting perspectives. After one of his trips as the *mutasarrif* of Kudüs to the rural hinterland of Jerusalem, he noted how the people of Halilurrahman (a Palestinian town located in the Hebron [el-Halil] district) circulated rumors that the thermometers used by doctors sent from the capital worsened the influenza outbreak instead of curing it and thus rejected medical assistance. Yet, for Mehmet Tevfik Bey, this "backwardness" was rooted elsewhere. "The difference looms large between the people of Jaffa and even Gaza, and the people of Halilurrahman," he noted. "This situation provides a good example how the construction of roads in a country is useful in terms of social progress." 113 The mentality of modernization had to be persuasive enough to dominate the counterrevolutionaries. An article in the December 16, 1908, issue of Volkan, a bastion of the counterrevolutionary press, entitled "What to Make Out of Our Soldiers," argued that Ottoman soldiers who were taught how to read and write would be able to function as primary schoolteachers when they completed their service and returned to their villages. Turning soldiers into teachers would provide a great relief to the Ottoman treasury as well, because it was the cheapest form of rural education, which could otherwise only be accomplished by erecting schools in each village. 114

These thoughts and suggestions were similar to those that characterized the broader processes of national development. In France, according to Eugen Weber, "the army turned out to be an agency for emigration, acculturation, and in the final analysis, civilization, an agency as potent in its way as the schools." ¹¹⁵

It was this pervasive ideology of modernization that the CUP hoped would derive utility after the application of its assimilationist Ottomanist principles. Steps of social change, as dictated by modernization, were to be practiced in the empire, with the end-result of unifying diverse peoples into one Ottoman nation (*millet-i vahide*), as hoped for by Ahmed Ferit. This one nation would manifest a unity of purpose and social cohesion, thus solving two important problems of governmentality in the Ottoman society that various observers from differing political factions

came to observe. ¹¹⁷ Like their Meiji counterparts in Japan who found it "increasingly difficult to reject" the political claims of various interest groups, ¹¹⁸ however, the Unionists also found themselves in the middle of a highly factionalized political scene. The entrenched interests of various political factions, often inherited from the millet system that the citizenship law of 1869 failed to undo, made the implementation of their agenda rather difficult, which resulted in a number of self-contradictory policies.

Ideologically, the Unionists found great use in exploiting pan-Turkism, pan-Islamism, and Ottomanism practically and concurrently, which did not necessarily come at the expense of any of the three. 119 In terms of their policies of centralization, the revolutionaries took cautious and differing steps depending on the changing conditions, time-frame, region, and demands of the target group. 120 Two notable examples were the policies in Albania and Yemen. In the final analysis, as Hanioğlu notes, "the CUP leaders resembled the Tanzimat statesmen who, by promoting the new while preserving the old, fostered an ambiguous dualism. They kept the sultan, but introduced the Committee; maintained the Islamic identity of the regime, yet endorsed secularism; espoused Turkism, yet professed Ottomanism; advocated democracy, but practiced repression; attacked imperialism, but courted empires; and proclaimed étatism while promoting liberal economics." 121 Such contradictions also came to characterize other official nationalisms in various imperial settings where a bureaucratic ideology of conservation had not been systematic or coherent, having significant regional variations in application. In this regard the inconsistent and complex processes of Russification are a point of reference. 122

Yet, when compared to their counterparts, the Unionists had further obstacles in making and implementing policies dictated by official nationalism. In the end various Ottoman communities that were to be molded into the imperial polity had a unique leverage in Ottoman politics. The support of foreign powers naturally suggested a very real threat of foreign intervention for the Unionists. Furthermore, even when the non-Muslim communities entertained the idea of Ottomanism, they saw themselves as partners of the empire. As Rıza Nur, a famous critic of the Unionists, would repeatedly note later, these communities at the receiving end of Ottomanism and the notion of millet-i hakime were not "colonies" in the end. They had political consciousness with varying degrees of ethnic or religious attachments, and their communal interests had an institutional basis and representation. This political scene, "bequeathed to them by the very Abdulhamid II they had come together to overthrow," 124 forced the Unionists to negotiate and bargain instead of using

outright coercion. ¹²⁵ In this sense Riza Nur was only partially right. It is true that the colonial mentality of development and modernization was extant among the upper echelons of Ottoman bureaucracy. For instance, the administrators such as Ferit Paşa, the governor of Konya (and later the grand vezir under Abdülhamid II), made explicit references to a colonial mode of administration elsewhere, such as in India. ¹²⁶ Yet in terms of assimilation and acculturation it mattered less for the target group to be a colony of an empire or its partner; what mattered was that the Ottoman Empire was no Britain or Russia in its strength of coercion, which became apparent in the immediate aftermath of the 1908 Revolution.

THE YOUNG TURKS' CORRECTIVE MOMENT: ASSIMILATION AND IMPERIAL CONSTRAINTS

"There is something symbolic in the famous picture taken at the state funeral of Abdülhamid II in 1918, in which the entire CUP leadership is seen following their deadly opponent's casket in solemn procession." ¹²⁷

After the restoration of the constitution on July 23, 1908, which was published in the newspapers a day later, the character of the regime remained dubious to say the least. ¹²⁸ One certainty was that the committee members positioned themselves as the protector of the constitutional arrangements. This was a part of the lesson drawn from the way in which the Russian and Iranian constitutional movements ("iki kanlı numune") came to suffer from counterrevolutionary reactions. 129 History would prove them right. In the aftermath of the revolution the Unionists abroad came back to the capital, only to see that it was the Salonika branch that capitalized on the revolution at the expense of the émigrés. The CUP displayed its strength through the back doors of national and local politics and tried to position itself as the single political representative of the whole Ottoman nation, which led to the declaration of the merger with the pro-decentralization faction. 130 The existing cabinet under the grand vezir Said Paşa was initially kept in power. Yet the political dogfights over the powers of the palace sealed the doom of Said Paşa, who threw his lot with the palace and accordingly was replaced by Kamil Paşa in August 1908. 131 According to Hüseyin Cahit, this was the first legally formed cabinet since the revolution and one of the first steps in fulfilling the promise of constitutionalism. 132 The choice of Kamil Paşa also signaled to the non-Muslim communities that the liberal faction among the Unionists was gaining the upper hand with possible prospects of decentralization, which the non-Muslim political actors favored. 133

The Greek Patriarchate made its postrevolution rhetoric clear when it proclaimed the necessity for the new arrangements "to accept the traditionally acquired rights of the millets as fundamental principles." 134 The CUP, albeit unwillingly, felt the need to compromise. With the impending first elections, the Greek Patriarchate voiced concerns about irregularities in elections and probable weak Greek representation in the parliament. The Ottoman Greeks who could not confirm their citizenship could not vote because they had avoided attaining citizenship in order to evade Ottoman taxation. To soothe the patriarchate's concerns, the CUP accordingly offered Greek representation in the parliament proportional to the Ottoman Greek population by setting quotas.¹³⁵ This was essentially a reluctant recognition on the CUP's part of communal privileges that went against the notion of Ottomanism, as noted by Hüseyin Cahit. 136 The Liberals within the Unionists, disillusioned with the recent merger, established the Liberal Union (Osmanlı Ahrar Fırkası) in September 1908 and became the main opposition to the CUP in the elections that took place throughout late 1908. While the Liberal Union had allied itself with the Greeks in electoral lists, they received a crushing defeat in the elections. Yet it remained as the main opposition, attracting the Muslims and non-Muslims who were still discontented with the CUP. 137 The Liberal Union also drew the support of the Armenian Patriarchate, which, like its Greek counterpart, positioned itself against the CUP from the beginning. While the Ottoman Greek community had a more or less monolithic political stance, however, the Ottoman Armenians were divided between the patriarchate and the secular political organizations of the Dashnaks and Hunchaks. "The attitude of the Dashnaks toward the amira class," as Ahmad noted, "resembled the attitude [of] the Unionists toward the Liberals," 138 reflective of the revolutionaries' stance vis-à-vis the functionaries of the ancien régime. Thus the Dashnaks allied themselves with the CUP, as did the Jews. 139 The Dashnaks' decision to do so was also reflective of the realpolitik calculations as much as it was ideological. The Hunchaks, their secular political rivals, had built up a strong alliance with the Prince Sabahaddin faction. 140

While the parliamentary discussions in late 1908 and early 1909 were dominated by the debate over the communal rights of the millets, ¹⁴¹ the attempts of the Liberal alliance to dislodge the CUP supremacy through legislative measures in the parliament led to a vote of no-confidence and removal of Liberal Kamil Paşa from the grand vizerate in February 1909. ¹⁴² A few months later a counterrevolution began in the capital that would have serious consequences for the dynamics of Ottoman

politics. While it remains difficult to point out who instigated it,¹⁴³ a coalition of Liberals and religious people as well as those disaffected by the bureaucratic purges capitalized on the counterrevolutionary momentum. It was suppressed by the Action Army, which restored order to the capital and punished the rebels, eventually resulting in the deposition of Abdülhamid II and the de facto closure of the Liberal Union (Ahrar Fırkası). The restoration through military intervention was supported by the Dashnaks and the CUP—a partnership that was renewed in September 1909 in the aftermath of the counterrevolution.¹⁴⁴

The Adana Massacres are often emphasized in this context, concurrent in their timing with the counterrevolutionary activity in the capital and elsewhere across the Ottoman provinces. ¹⁴⁵ Rooted in dispute over Armenian landownership that had brewed in Adana since the 1880s, the incident seems to be an isolated event in its scope. The intercommunal violence was (with the partial exception of Aleppo) limited to Adana, where it was particularly worsened by the incapability and heavy-handedness of the anticonstitutionalist vice-governor of the vilayet about whom Cemal Paşa later expressed his bitterness. In retrospect the Adana Massacres became the very microcosm of the problems on a local level that the CUP failed to address in the first year after the revolution, rooted in population movements, the persisting landownership issue, and the conservative Ottoman local administrators. The functionaries of the old regime justified their harsh measures on the grounds of an uncompromising attitude of local Armenian leaders seeking their rights. ¹⁴⁶

In light of such instances of provincial conflict (rooted in the decadesold problems that remained unsolved) the CUP cadres, which were largely devoid of administrative experience, were in desperate need to consolidate their revolution. The final months of 1909 saw the CUP's attempts at consolidation, when it began championing legislations that would realize the CUP version of Ottoman unity and official nationalism (Ottomanization). But the inherent constraints embedded in the old order remained intact, if not more apparent, in the few years to come. The first changes were the constitutional amendments that increased the power of the parliament at the expense of the monarchy, paralleled with subsequent budget cuts. 147 Although the increase in the power of the executive would work against the CUP's subsequent Ottomanist reforms, the modified article 36 of the constitution gave the cabinet the authority to issue temporary laws (kanun-u muvakkat) when the parliament was not in session—a clause that was to be abused by the CUP in later years. The years to come would offer a good lesson for the CUP in terms of the capabilities of a unified opposition, "when the Committee found the Chamber of its own creation unmanageable." ¹⁴⁸ The Unionists first dealt with those individual critics through political assassinations, blackmailing, and intimidation. ¹⁴⁹ Such illiberal tactics directly contributed to the swelling of the ranks of Liberal opposition, which strengthened significantly in 1910 and gained its institutional framework with the Freedom and Accord Party (Hürriyet ve İtilaf Fırkası) by late 1911.

The immediate aftermath of the constitutional changes after the counterrevolution was a series of legislative proposals designed to increase administrative and legal centralization, as highlighted by the CUP's continued insistence of reforming the civil and military bureaucracy in parallel with its commitment to bureaucratic purges and demotions. 150 As part of the broader vision of assimilationist Ottomanism, other legislative changes came at the expense of communal rights of the millets, each legislative proposal encountering significant opposition. In the area of education the attempt was to give more powers to the Ministry of Education in supervising the curriculum, which the non-Muslims representatives (except Jews) rejected. Instead they asked for the continuation of the traditional educational practices. The debate around the Law of Associations highlighted similar themes. In line with an antiethnic stance that marginalized the expression of ethnicity, the law would ban the ethnic, nationalist, and religious associations, the CUP argued, and keep the cultural and literary ones. But the legislation failed to garner the support of the non-Muslim deputies.¹⁵¹ It would make little difference, as associations that were political in nature would emerge later under the cover of literary societies ("adı edebi cemiyet; fakat maksat istiklal"). 152

The gap between theory and practice loomed similarly wide in the legislation on universal conscription. While some Armenian and Jewish deputies supported the law on the grounds of Ottomanism, the Greek Patriarchate insisted on separating Christian recruits from the Muslim ones on the ground. The patriarch argued that such a division would make it easier to provide spiritual service to the soldiers—a position embraced by non-Muslim deputies. The Muslim members of the parliament also voiced concerns about practical difficulties such as the issue of language in commanding the military units and the financial burden that would be caused by the annulment of military tax exemptions. Yet the CUP pushed for the law and introduced universal conscription by August 1909. The law and introduced universal co

While the CUP cadres increasingly came to interpret any expression of ethnic identities as divisive and contrary to Ottomanism, Muslims or non-Muslims (Turks or non-Turks) who were at the receiving end of these centralizing policies of the CUP accordingly criticized each policy as an attempt at Turkification. 155 "Turkification" in this sense was the term that came to dominate the vocabulary of the Ottoman domestic opposition to the CUP as well as the British diplomatic correspondence (thus also American perceptions). 156 Yet not all Western diplomatic accounts equated administrative centralization with Turkification. For instance, a report on pan-Turanism dated October 1917 argued that the CUP measures toward Lebanon during the Great War, particularly Cemal Paşa's order to cut off food supplies to Lebanon, should be seen in the light of administrative centralization, not nationalism. Such steps were taken "not because the Lebanon was Arab, but because it was autonomous." 157 Another British report on the Unionists (dated 1911) also highlighted a policy of Ottomanization as the source of widespread provincial unrest. 158 Accordingly, the lines between state centralization and Turkification were blurry in diplomatic circles, to say the least.

The scholarship has followed suit. Approaching teleological nationalist readings on Turkification with caution, some scholars have called into question whether the CUP policies actually targeted Turkification. The language policy of the CUP, for instance, did not break with the previous policies. Highlighting a policy of imperial acculturation, Kayalı argues that primary education was conducted in local languages and cultures but "instruction in Turkish in secondary and higher education aimed at incorporating local groups into the imperial administrative system and at developing an imperial elite." The only projected rupture in the Unionist language policy was in the domain of law courts. This was rejected on practical grounds by some Unionists themselves, such as Hüseyin Cahit, who argued that further acculturation was necessary for such projected changes. The main political party that emerged in opposition to the CUP and thus secured the backing of those distressed by its politics was the Hürriyet ve İtilaf Fırkası (Freedom and Coalition Party), which preached a federalist structure, thus highlighting the point of tension between centralization and decentralization.

Such examples that complicate a narrative of Turkification are neatly avoided in the broader literature, which continues to read the Unionist years before the Great War from the vantage point of the deportations of Armenians in 1915 and the ensuing massacres. The broader literature is not completely nonresponsive to the body of scholarship arguing that

policies of centralization and acculturation do not immediately amount to Turkification. But it theoretically needs to emphasize a point of rupture or radicalization that will illustrate an important ethnocentrist turn toward political Turkism in the CUP circles (since Turkism has existed culturally). This turning point in the field was the Ottoman defeat in the Balkan Wars in 1912–13 and its traumatic effects on the ruling elites. Once this ethnocentrist turn is established in the narrative, the Great War can be framed as a great opportunity for the CUP to realize its ethnocentric goals.

Three objections could be raised to the idea of World War I being an opportunity space. First, seeing the war as an opportunity space establishes a strong teleological causality. 160 Second, corresponding speculative claims such as "[t]he Unionists must have viewed the coming of the war as a chance to solve the national question" totally ignore the recent body of literature. 161 It clearly shows that the Ottoman road to war was not ideological but pragmatic and strategic in its attempt to avoid international isolation. 162 Third, such a teleological view results in historical selectiveness: once the Ottoman road to war is interpreted based on its consequence, certain historical realities such as the CUP's attempts at negotiation with Russia and Dashnak revolutionaries before the start of the war get overlooked. In diplomatic negotiations with Russia, for instance, Enver Paşa argued that "an Ottoman-Russian alliance would render rebellion by Caucasian Muslims and Armenians 'inconceivable' and secure tranquility for both empires." ¹⁶³ In this sense we could interpret the war as an opportunity for the Ottomans only as far as the recovery of the empire was concerned, not as a means to carry out well-planned destructive policies that would bring about its demise. Finally, emphasizing an ethnocentrist turn as a result of the Balkan Wars fails to take into account the continuing primacy of religious identification as a policy determinant in the post-Balkan War era in both the Ottoman Empire and republican Turkey.

It is true that the Balkan Wars had a formative impact on the mindset of the Ottoman ruling elites. ¹⁶⁴ Yet whether this impact was an ethnocentric one is open to question. The instances of forced migration and settlement policies are often advanced as evidence for this ethnocentric turn. ¹⁶⁵ In a world where ethnic categories were fluid to say the least, however, the basis of population exchanges in the aftermath of the Balkan Wars, rather tellingly, continued to take religious affiliation as the criterion both in theory and in practice. This was the case in the population exchanges between Greece and Bulgaria and the exchanges between Turkey and Greece in 1923–24. Every demographic policy in the late Ottoman period and republican years actually demonstrates that the frame of reference continued to be religious affiliation in targeting communities for homogenization. Consider the case of the Karamanlis, the ethnically Turkish people of central Anatolia, who were Christian in religious affiliation. They were sent to Greece in exchange for Greek-speaking Muslims. Furthermore, the settlers who hailed from the Balkans and Caucasus were Muslim people who were not ethnically Turkish. Their strategic settlement in Anatolia, clearly as an attempt to balance out the non-Muslim populations in the late Ottoman period, does not demonstrate an ethnic turn but a preference for religious affiliation.

Apart from demographic measures, scholars point out two other important acts of legislation in the post-Balkan War era as signs of Turkification. The first one is the legislation dated September 1915 (Mekatib-i Hususiye Talimatnamesi) that introduced a number of regulations in regard to the operation of private schools across the empire. The legislation stipulated that Ottoman Turkish was the official language of the empire and that Ottoman (not Turkish) history and geography must be taught in private schools. The language of instruction (say, Armenian or Greek) would remain as it was, and non-Turks could teach these mandatory classes. 166 The second regulation is the circular of Enver Paşa dated January 5, 1916, that replaced the place-names in non-Muslim languages across the empire with the Islamic names. While the received wisdom continued to interpret the circular as a sign of Turkification, it failed to take into account that the circular only targeted the non-Muslim placenames and thus excluded the Muslim (Kurdish and Arab) ones. The ethnic turn in changing the place-names took place only in the republican years, with particularly widespread implementation from the second half of the 1950s onward. 167 Enver Paşa's circular meant that "the assimilation of Muslims was conceivable... Christians not,"168 a shift that was not ethnocentric per se but religious.

This new understanding that Muslims but not Christians could be assimilated is an interesting shift indeed. It is often framed as reflective of the Ottoman ruling elite's realization that the non-Muslim communities in the empire had a greater degree of national consciousness and thus could not be assimilated. This is only partially correct. Just as in Austria-Hungary, where the ruling nationality was the last to develop some semblance of national consciousness, the Muslims in the Ottoman Empire were also relatively late in doing so, as admitted by many contemporaries. The realization on the part of the Ottoman ruling elites

that the non-Muslim communities could not be assimilated emerged not because of the level of national consciousness among the non-Muslims but rather because these communities had been the recipients of European nation-state promotion. In other words, the assimilation of Ottoman Christians was more difficult than that of Muslims not because the Christians (say, Armenian peasants) had a markedly different level of national consciousness but because serious political and diplomatic obstacles stood in the way of assimilating them into the imperial polity. In this sense the assimilation of Muslims and Jews continued to be a possibility because they were not subject to European nation-state promotion.

In writing the histories of nationalism in the Ottoman Empire, two important frameworks need to be reconsidered in terms of their place in both European and Ottoman politics. First, as Anscombe notes, "the eclipse of religious themes in historiography" does not match with the fact that "Christianity remained a fundamental element of European culture, identity, and politics." 169 Rodogno has seconded this point very recently. 170 This emphasis on religion also has resonance for Ottoman politics. We often utilize language and demographic policies as the acid tests to measure Turkification/Ottomanization. Perhaps a better norm to understand the true nature of Ottomanization is the institutionalization (or lack thereof) of conversion or, as Ahmed Ferit put it, "religious assimilation" ("dinen...benzetmek"). 171 One reason why such an emphasis on the religious component of assimilation is missing in secondary analyses, with few exceptions, 172 is that conversion does not neatly add up to the arguments on an ethnocentric Turkification that continue to project the development of nationalism in the Ottoman Empire along ethnic lines (which are also often secular trajectories). In this sense I argue that official Ottoman nationalism, with its broader trend toward imperial assimilation, does a better job in explaining the contradictory policies of the Unionists.

The second important framework is the important role of interstate competition on a local level. Reynolds has recently argued that "[t]he affirmation of the nation-state by the great powers as the normative unit of global politics exerted a tremendous impact upon local politics already in turmoil." Along these lines we can list three important effects of interstate politics that unraveled during and after the Balkan Wars. First, the wars made public the Ottoman military weakness, so in their immediate aftermath the Great Powers concentrated their efforts to solve the Armenian Question. These took the form of imposing Armenian autonomy on the Ottoman Empire—a development that also led to the unification of

diverse Armenian political factions that were until then politically quite apart from one another. Remembering how earlier instances of foreign intervention led to separation from the empire, the Ottoman ruling elites were very much cognizant of what this recent move to solve the Armenian Question would entail. Second, the Balkan Wars consolidated the Unionists' distrust of international law and highlighted the necessity to have military might to overcome local, regional, and international difficulties. The European powers, which had earlier announced the preservation of the status quo regardless of the result of the war, did not go along with their initial projection. The Ottomans ended up recovering only part of their territorial losses in the First Balkan War through sheer military prowess in the Second Balkan War. 174 Finally, in the aftermath of the Balkan Wars the Christian communities in the empire began to be seen as nondesirables because they were the recipients of European nation-state promotion. 175 In other words, their mere existence in a predominantly Muslim country would continue to be the source of foreign intervention. Further research is needed to prove this point, but some analytical evidence can still be put forth. According to Ahmad, the shift from a secular Ottomanism to an Islamist one occurred in the spring of 1913, as is particularly clear in decentralization policies vis-à-vis the Ottoman Arab populations. 176 Kayalı agrees. 177 Ginio also follows suit and highlights how contemporaries interpreted the Ottoman defeat in the Balkan Wars as the failure of a secular symbolism of Ottomanism that lacked an Islamic vocabulary. 178

Despite such a shift from secular to religious Ottomanism, "ethnic origin' is conspicuous for its absence as a criterion or parameter of Turkish nationhood." This was true for the Ottoman Empire as for its role model, France. Republican Turkey also continued to be "ethnically blind" just like its predecessor. To argue otherwise necessitates too many omissions. For instance, the vocabulary of the resistance movement in Anatolia after the end of World War I placed a major emphasis on mobilizing the Ottoman-Muslim populations who formed the dominant nation. 180 It could very well be argued that this was a pragmatic move in mobilizing the people, but the emphasis on Islam is clear even in some correspondence addressed to foreign governments. 181 Furthermore, it is illustrative of the ethnically blind nature of Turkish nationalism and the lingering legacy of the Ottoman imprint that millet, the Ottoman term for organizing the populations along the lines of religious affiliation in the empire, came to correspond to "nation" in modern day usage. Terms that highlighted a more ethnocentric focus, such as *kavmiyyet* (ethnicity) or *trk* (race), and stressed ethnic alignments in late Ottoman usage lacked emphasis in the republican years. The National Pact (Misak-1 Milli), passed in the last session of the Ottoman Parliament in January 28, 1920, stressed similar themes. Its first article, interestingly, argued for the indivisible nature of the boundaries of areas with an Ottoman-Muslim majority, while the future of the territories with an Arab majority but under occupation were to be settled through a plebiscite. Such a claim for the Arab populations does not fit the nationalist teleology, so it has been overlooked in many studies, noted as a point of curiosity, or simply interpreted as an "error" in the National Pact.

Only when the teleological lenses that seek a definite role for ideology in dictating national politics are removed can we frame a meaningful answer to a recent question posed by Howard Eissestat: "How do we balance the Young Turks' obsession with Anatolia and their wider vision of a reinvigorated Ottoman Empire?" The answer lies in the notion of a conservationist Ottomanism as a form of official nationalism that existed even when the empire was on the verge of losing World War I. After the collapse of the imperial order it is natural to expect that the imprint of the Ottoman legacy on the post-Ottoman spaces continued to be as pronounced in the articulation of subsequent nationalist arrangements, whether Turkish or Arab, as it was in architecture, cuisine, administration, law, language, and culture. Perhaps Islam-centered Ottomanism, with its modernizing tendencies, was perpetuated by the later secular regimes across the contemporary Middle East, only under different national territorial rubrics.

CONCLUSION

Alan Sked aptly argues that "instead of continuing with the old liberal historiography that divides the European Empires from the developing democracies of Western Europe, we should recognize that, instead of despotic militaristic states in decline, these empires shared a lot of problems with West European states and like them were making mixed but definite progress." Ignoring such revisionism, however, scholars have searched late Ottoman history in an attempt to recover the origins of Turkish nationalism—a singular perspective that comes at the expense of useful comparative categories of analysis, such as the notion of official nationalism. Ottoman official nationalism was part of the broader global response to popular nationalisms in imperial frameworks; as a category of analysis, it captures the intricacies and contradictions of the

late Ottoman political and ideological world better than other restrictive conceptual frameworks do.

But the failure of Ottoman official nationalism should not diminish its explanatory value in historical analysis. In this sense Ottomanism as a form of official nationalism designates a loosely knit political pragmatism that characterizes the imperial elite's attempts at empire preservation, just like its counterparts elsewhere in Europe, Asia, and Latin America. ¹⁸⁷ Often seen as a self-formulated "civilizing" mission, ¹⁸⁸ Ottomanism shared similar ambitions and attitudes with its French and Romanov counterparts in transforming the backward peasants into citizens of a modern imperial state. ¹⁸⁹ In the end, as Selim Deringil aptly notes, "the Ottoman sultan, the Meiji emperor, the Russian tsar, the Habsburg emperor were all drawn towards the twentieth century at different tempos, but down broadly similar paths." ¹⁹⁰ Their policies were along roughly similar lines in a bid to contain comparable problems.

Implicit in my comparative approaches is the inherent scholarly necessity to avoid creating a special path peculiar to Turkish nationalism, which seems to have dominated the field as a result of narrowly historicizing the deportation of Ottoman Armenians in 1915—a scholarly pattern rather similar to the *Sonderweg* debate in German historiography. This what-went-wrong perspective is with us today because scholars have been extremely critical so far of historically contextualizing the late Ottoman period. This fear of contextualization has some legitimate grounds, however, because historicization often functioned as a tool to justify the deportation of Ottoman Armenians in 1915. Yet this lack of historicization also has its own serious problems, as it tends to create historical singularity, fix rigid ideological mappings and meanings to the complex late Ottoman realities, and generate its own historical teleology—issues that also raise a barrier in understanding the extent and intellectual maturation of identity politics in the late Ottoman years.

Accordingly, I suggest seeing those who were at the helm of the empire before and during the Great War as lacking the power to shape the events by recourse to an overarching definitive ideology. Instead they essentially reacted to the events around them through a multiplicity of tools, ideological and practical and often self-contradictory, just as a bureaucrat would do. Ottomanism in this sense, with its modernizing tools that tried to forge a loyal imperial polity, was the quintessential bureaucratic ideology of conservation, characterized by its inconsistent, unsystematic, and complex applications, just like its counterpart in tsarist Russia. ¹⁹² The comparative relevance of seeing the late Ottoman leaders

as "empire preservers" has been hinted at for the Ottoman case by Suny, who argues that "the rulers of the [Ottoman] empire during World War I were primarily state imperialists, empire preservers, rather than fully committed ethnonationalists. Their demographic policies stemmed primarily from ideas of security in a moment of perceived acute danger, rather than nation-building." This acute danger was the very real possibility of an Armenian state, whether independent or under tsarist orbit, but still at the expense of the Ottoman Empire. 194 In this sense the deportations functioned as a means of destroying the demographic and territorial bases of a projected or imagined Armenian state or putting an end to the reality of Armenians constituting a "political force." 195

The processes of expulsion, massacre, and intercommunal violence were characterized by significant regional variations, as demonstrated by Ahmet Efiloğlu in the case of Greeks (chapter 13 in this volume) and as argued elsewhere by Hilmar Kaiser and Uğur Ümit Üngör in the case of Armenians. Thus monocausal approaches that reduce political decision making to a mere ideology and its neat application—nationalism as applied by the CUP in this instance—are a simple necessity to establish a coherent teleological narrative that conditions historical analysis to the end of the empire and the birth of nation-states. I argue that the concept of official Ottoman nationalism is a useful analytic tool not just to understand the ideological fluidities of the late Ottoman elite but also to make sense of how any policy crafted in the center may result in both varying regional applications and a series of unintended consequences, be they in the center or in the provinces.

NOTES

1. An earlier version of this study was presented in the Association for the Study of Nationalities conference in New York in 2011. I would like to thank Peter Sluglett, Hasan Kayalı, Nader Sohrabi, Hakan Yavuz, Abdulhamit Kırmızı, Garabet Moumdjian, Tetsuya Sahara, Nazan Çiçek, William Holt, Mustafa Tanrıverdi, Hakan Erdagöz, Ashley Simon, Serpil Atamaz, Masaki Kakizaki, Can Özcan, and Serhun Al for reading the earlier drafts of this chapter in part or in full, pointing out additional sources, and sparking further thoughts.

For instance, see Julia Philips Cohen, "Between Civic and Islamic Ottomanism"; Michelle U. Campos, *Ottoman Brothers*; Michael Provence, "Ottoman Modernity, Colonialism, and Insurgency in the Interwar Arab East"; Isa Blumi, *Reinstating the Ottomans*; Vangelis Kechriotis, "On the Margins of National Historiography."

- 2. Kechriotis, "On the Margins of National Historiography," 127.
- 3. Similar articulations were made, for instance, in the case of the collapse of the Habsburgs. Alan Sked, *The Decline and Fall of the Habsburg Empire*, 3–4.

- 4. Campos, Ottoman Brothers, 251.
- 5. Ernest Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, 20-21.
- For a brilliant account that captures the centrality of the notion of legibility to the modern state mechanisms, see James Scott, Seeing Like a State, 53–83.
- 7. For the broader social science perspective on the ironies of history and the abundance of unintended consequences in modern historical development, see Robert Jervis, *System Effects*, 61–67.
- 8. Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, 21.
- See Peter M. Haas, "Epistemic Communities and International Policy Coordination."
- Christine M. Philliou, "The Ottoman Empire's Absent Nineteenth Century," 143 (emphasis in the original).
- 11. Karen Barkey, Empire of Difference, 4.
- 12. To articulate the impact of the immediate political contexts (i.e., nation-states) that emerged after the collapse of imperial frameworks in dictating the contours of historiography, we could perhaps consider the case of Russia under the Romanovs. Socialist approaches dominated the historiography after the collapse of the imperial regime, instead of a nationalist teleology, even though the late Romanov era in general and the processes of Russification in particular bore significant resemblance to the late Ottoman realities and policies of "Turkification," as pointed out in the second part of this chapter. See Andreas Kappeler, "The Ambiguities of Russification." See also Michael A. Reynolds, *Shattering Empires*, 4.
- 13. I am borrowing the term "empires as prisons of nations" from an article by Ellen Comisso, "Empires as Prisons of Nations versus Empires as Political Opportunity Structures." The importance of contrasting the instances of rejection with those of consent has been highlighted by Hasan Kayalı, who argues that "[h]istorians, particularly when their outlook is affected by nationalist biases, tend to focus on instances of rejection' and not sufficiently on consent": Kayalı, *Arabs and Young Turks*, 13. For an attempt to overcome the dominant narrative that focuses on instances of rejection, see George W. Gawrych, "Tolerant Dimensions of Cultural Pluralism in the Ottoman Empire." Interestingly, this process of highlighting the instances of rejection is not just limited to the cases in the Ottoman Empire but also applies elsewhere, such as tsarist Russia under the Romanovs. Alexei Miller, *The Romanov Empire and Nationalism*, 51.
- 14. Hülya Adak, "National Myths and Self-Na(rra)tions," 517.
- 15. Comisso, "Empires as Prisons of Nations," 140.
- 16. James Scott, Weapons of the Weak, 293.
- 17. Erik J. Zürcher, Turkey, 33-34.
- 18. Gerassimos Karabelias, "From National Heroes to National Villains, 268–72.
- 19. Ibid., 264-68.
- 20. Comisso, "Empires as Prisons of Nations," 158.
- 21. Philliou, "The Ottoman Empire's Absent Nineteenth Century," 149–52.
- 22. Christine M. Philliou, "The Paradox of Perceptions," 666.
- 23. Comisso, "Empires as Prisons of Nations," 158.
- 24. Karabelias, "From National Heroes," 273.
- 25. See Odile Moreau, "Bosnian Resistance to Conscription."
- 26. Cited in Duncan Heaton-Armstrong, The Six Month Kingdom, vi.

- 27. Isa Blumi, "Divergent Loyalties and Their Memory," in Isa Blumi, *Rethinking the Late Ottoman Empire*, 176.
- 28. For the memoirs of Capt. Duncan Heaton-Armstrong, who was the private secretary to Wilhelm zu Wied: see Heaton-Armstrong, *The Six Month Kingdom*.
- 29. Zürcher, *Turkey*, 46–47.
- 30. Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, *Ma'ruzat*, 1; İlber Ortaylı, "Greeks in the Ottoman Administration during the Tanzimat Period," 161.
- 31. Philliou, "The Paradox of Perceptions," 665-66.
- 32. Ortaylı, "Greeks in the Ottoman Administration," 161.
- 33. Philliou, "The Paradox of Perceptions," 661, 664.
- 34. Charles Issawi, "Introduction," 6–12. It is important to note that the figures provided here as illustrative of the non-Muslim ratio in various professions are not indicative of a clear-cut division of labor based on nationality. This approach has rightfully so been critiqued. See Hilmar Kaiser, *Imperialism, Racism, and Development Theories*. For a more nuanced take on division of labor in the Ottoman Empire, see Donald Quataert, "The Social History of Labor in the Ottoman Empire."
- 35. Çağlar Keyder, "The Ottoman Empire," 34.
- 36. Zürcher, Turkey, 33.
- 37. Comisso, "Empires as Prisons of Nations," 158.
- 38. Zürcher, Turkey, 33.
- 39. Frederick F. Anscombe, "Conclusion," 552.
- 40. Barkey, Empire of Difference, 7.
- 41. One example of how local encounters could shape an individual's identity and outlook on life comes from Derviş Vahdeti, who was often shunned in the broader historiography as a reactionary leader of the Counterrevolution of 1909. In a letter addressed to Abdülhamid II, Vahdeti summarizes his earlier years in Ottoman Cyprus and notes that he had "no need to lie; I did not know that I was an Ottoman and was part of such an empire." He blamed the educational institutions in the empire and their lack in inculcating an Ottoman identity. The first major transformation in his life (the necessity to learn a foreign language) only occurred when he observed the level of progress in the Ottoman Greek community around him in Cyprus: Volkan, 28 Kanunievvel 1324 (January 10, 1909), numaro 17, in İkinci Meşrutiyetin İlk Ayları, ed. Ertuğrul Düzdağ, 72–73.
- 42. Anscombe, "Conclusion," 552.
- 43. Comisso, "Empires as Prisons of Nations," 156.
- 44. Yervant Odian, Comrade Panchoonie, 16.
- 45. M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire, 135–36.
- Şevket Pamuk, "The Ottoman Empire in the 'Great Depression' of 1873–1896,"
 111–12.
- 47. Zürcher, Turkey, 76.
- 48. Garabet K. Moumdjian, "From Millet-i Sadıka to Millet-i Asiya," 307.
- 49. See Sam White, The Climate of Rebellion in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire.
- 50. Quoted in Richard Millman, "The Bulgarian Massacres Reconsidered," 227.
- 51. Ibid., 230.
- 52. Tetsuya Sahara, "Two Different Images," 493–504.
- 53. Ivan M. Vazov, Under the Yoke, 344.

- 54. Philip Smith, Why War? 206-13.
- 55. Davide Rodogno, Against Massacre, 274.
- 56. Kemal H. Karpat, Studies on Ottoman Social and Political History, 378. Çağlar Keyder reached a similar conclusion: "That most of these newly enriched groups in the Balkans were non-Muslim was a significant factor in attracting the protection, encouragement, and support of various European powers, who both helped prepare the political and intellectual case for nationalism, and provided crucial diplomatic and military assistance. This is the story of Greek, Serbian, and Bulgarian nationalisms": Keyder, "The Ottoman Empire," 33.
- 57. James Scott, *The Moral Economy of the Peasant*, 26–34.
- 58. For more information on the patterns of urban unrest, see Edmund Burke III, "Towards a History of Urban Collective Action in the Middle East"; Sami Zubaida, "Urban Social Movements, 1750–1950"; James Grehan, "Street Violence and Social Imagination in Late Mamluk and Ottoman Damascus."
- 59. Ariel Salzmann, "Is There a Moral Economy of State Formation?" 303-4.
- 60. Bruce Masters, "The 1850 Events in Aleppo," 17.
- 61. Ariel Salzmann, "The Age of Tulips," 96.
- 62. Anscombe, "Conclusion," 552.
- 63. Moumdjian, "From Millet-i Sadıka," 309.
- 64. Hilmar Kaiser, "Regional Resistance to Central Government Policies," 179.
- 65. This notion is related to the larger debate of whether nations or states come first. I am very much in agreement with Eric Hobsbawm that states make nations. As quoted by Hobsbawm, Massimo d'Azeglio, an Italian politician, declared that "we have made Italy, now we have to make Italians": Hobsbawm, Nations and Nationalism since 1780, 10, 44–45.
- 66. Karabelias, "From National Heroes," 270 (emphasis added).
- 67. Isa Blumi, "Introduction: Blinded by the State," in Isa Blumi, *Rethinking the Late Ottoman Empire*, 21; Isa Blumi, "Locating Fragmented Identities," in ibid.
- 68. This was the take of the Greek deputy of Istanbul, Pandelaki Kozmidi Efendi, who highlighted the local issues as undermining the Ottoman loyalties that the Albanians cherished for centuries. *Meclis-i Mebusan Zabıt Ceridesi*, vol. 1, İçtima Senesi 3, Devre 1, 10. İnikad, 20 Teşrinisani 1326 (December 3, 1910), 290–91.
- 69. Eyal Ginio, "Mobilizing the Ottoman Nation during the Balkan Wars," 176.
- 70. Kemal H. Karpat, "The Memoirs of N. Batzaria," 280-81.
- 71. Efraim Karsh and Inari Karsh, "Myth in the Desert," 272-73.
- 72. Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, 61.
- 73. Kemal H. Karpat, "Millets and Nationality," 166.
- 74. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 86. This notion of official nationalism was first coined by Hugh Seton-Watson, who came to characterize it as a project of establishing a new mode of political legitimacy in imperial frameworks that targeted assimilation, integration, and homogenization: Seton-Watson, *Nations and States*, 148.
- 75. For an English translation, see Yusuf Akçura, Three Policies.
- 76. Yusuf Akçura [Akçura oğlu Yusuf], Üç Tarz-ı Siyaset, Ali Kemal'in buna cevabı ile Ahmed Ferid'in aynı mevzua dair bir mektubunu da havidir, 5–8.
- 77. Ibid., 2.

- 78. Ali Kemal, "Cevabimiz," in Akçura, Üç Tarz-ı Siyaset, 36–39, 43–45.
- 79. Yenal Ünal, Ahmet Ferit Tek'in Hayatı, 8–9, 13–15.
- 80. Ahmed Ferit, "Bir Mektup," in Akçura, *Üç Tarz-ı Siyaset*, 62.
- 81. For an example of a deliberate settlement policy, see the case of the environs of Adana in the aftermath of the Berlin settlement: Tetsuya Sahara, "A Hidden Agenda," 95–97.
- 82. Ferit, "Bir Mektup," 52-55.
- 83. Ibid., 53.
- 84. Taner Akçam, A Shameful Act, 48. This assumption is rooted in misreading the Tanzimat and Hamidian years largely from a Eurocentric perspective. For an attempt to undo this reading and offer a more balanced account that continues to highlight the Islamic nature of the Ottoman state during the periods under consideration, see Anscombe, "Conclusion," 535–50.
- 85. M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, Preparation for a Revolution, 315–16.
- 86. Quoted in Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 91. For the full text, see http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/oogenerallinks/macaulay/txt_minute_education_1835.html.
- 87. Ferit, "Bir Mektup," 52 (emphasis added). This notion of religious assimilation is often missing in secondary accounts on Turkification/Ottomanization. See the end of the second section of this article for further discussion of its relevance.
- 88. In the midst of the debate in the post-1909 counterrevolution on the alleged processes of Turkification, Hüseyin Cahit made it clear that the Young Turks did not aim to destroy various languages of the empire but rather to protect them, while making sure that every different element in Ottoman society would have utter loyalty to the Ottoman motherland. Cahit thus argued that the political vision of the Young Turks included not only the celebration of different ethnoreligious cultures in the empire but also the creation of a supranational Ottoman identity above these ethnic markers: "Genç Türkler kendi programlarına mekteb-i ibtidaiyyede lisan-ı tedrisin elsine-i mahalliye üzerine cereyan edeceği esasını koymuşlardır.... Bu gün bir Arnavud köyünde çocuklar tahsil-i ibtidaiyeyi Arnavudça, bir Rum köyünde Rumca, bir Arap köyünde Arapça ilah olarak elde edecekdir. Sonra mekteb-i idadiyede elsine-i mahaliye ihtiyari olarak tedris edilmekde devam olunacakdır. Genç Türkler ne istiyorlar? Genç Türkler Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nu öyle bir hale getirmek istiyorlar ki efradından hangi birini alacak olursanız olunuz kendisini bu vatanın evladı bilsun, bu vatanın saadeti ve selameti uğrunda icab ederse feda-1 can edebilsun, Osmanlılığı terkib eden efrad-1 sairede kendisini düşman değil bir kardeş bulsun. Aradakı fark isimlerin, maabedlerin, lisanların başka başka olmasından ibaret kalsun. Fakat hisler birleşsin": Hüseyin Cahit, "Gayrimüslimlerin Askerliği Münasebetiyle," *Tanin*, sene 1, numaro 257, 8 Mayıs 325 (May 21, 1909), 1.
- 89. For instance, when the Greek political program became public before the first elections in the post-1908 period Hüseyin Cahid rejected the usage of any identity markers, whether Greek, Armenian, Bulgarian, or Turkish: "Rum, Ermeni, Bulgar, ilah [ilah ahırihi]...bugün artık hep Osmanlıdır.... Siyasi fırkalarımız Rumluğa, Ermeniliğe, Bulgarlığa, Türklüğe göre ayrılacak yerde siyaset-i umumiye-i dahiliye ve hariciyede takip edilecek mes'eleye göre itidalperveran, ifradperveran vesa'ire

- gibi namlarla birbirinden temeyyüz etmek": Hüseyin Cahit, "Rumların Programı," *Tanin*, sene 1, numaro 34, 21 Ağustos 1324 (September 3, 1908) 1.
- 90. Ferit, "Bir Mektup," 52.
- 91. Anderson, Imagined Communities, 85.
- 92. Accordingly, the people who would be targeted by the bureaucratic purges in the post-1908 period were those with proven record of espionage ("hafiyelik ile iştihar etmiş bulunanlar"). The criterion for bureaucratic promotions was modernized education, even though such an abstract take on the issue did not automatically cancel out proficiency in know-how: "Bu nazariyeyi tamamiyle, suret-i katıyyede kabul etmek biraz haksızlık olacağı aşikardır. Mektepden kasıt kesb-i malumat etmekdir. Şu halde mektepli mektepsiz diye katiplerimizi ayıracağımıza ma'lumatlı ma'lumatsız diye ayırmak daha doğru olur"): Hüseyin Cahit, "Tensikat," *Tanin*, sene 1, numaro 260, 11 Mayıs 325 (May 24, 1909), 1.
- 93. "Teba'a-i Osmaniyenin hizmet-i devletde istihdam olunmak içün devletin lisan-ı resmiyesi olan Türkçe'yi bilmeleri şartdır": *Kanun-i Esasi, Meclis-i Mebusan Nizamname-i Dahilisi, 6*.
- 94. Ibid., 110.
- 95. Ferit, "Bir Mektup," 55.
- 96. Carter Findley, "The Acid Test of Ottomanism," 342-43, 364-65.
- 97. Nader Sohrabi, Revolution and Constitutionalism in the Ottoman Empire and Iran. 282.
- 98. Ibid., 21.
- 99. Common frustration at the neopatrimonial policies is easy to discern in the Unionist mentality. Enver Paşa, for instance, noted in his autobiography that the unfair promotions in the Ottoman military had negative effects on junior officers ("Kendisi ordu mensuplarının en kıdemlilerinden birisi olduğu gerekçesi ile tümen komutanı yapıldı. Bu neticeyi İstanbul'a birkaç bin lira gönderip oradaki bir arkadaşının yardımı ile istihsal etmişti"): M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, ed., Kendi Mektuplarında Enver Paşa, 263.
- Feroz Ahmad and Dankwart A. Rustow, "İkinci Meşrutiyet Döneminde Meclisler," 250.
- 101. In the first charter of the Ottoman Committee of Union and Progress, drafted in 1895 in the immediate aftermath of the European intervention in the Ottoman affairs after the Sasun Rebellion of 1894, the first article of the charter noted how the Hamidian regime's infringements on human rights such as just rule, freedom, and equality not only obstructed the Ottoman path to progress but also became the very instruments of Western interventions and extortions ("hükümet-i hazıranın adalet, müsavat, hürriyet gibi hukuk-u beşeriyeyi ihlal iden ve bütün osmanlıları terakkiden men ile vatan-ı ecnebinin yed-i tasallut ve iğtisabına düşüren usul-u idaresinin"): Osmanlı İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti Nizamnamesi, 2. This notion of seeing the Hamidian regime as dragging the empire to a decline and eventual demise was commonplace among the Unionist circles, including Talat Paşa ("inhitata ve ölüme sürüklemekte olan Abdülhamit hükümeti"): Enver Bolayır, ed., Talat Paşa'nın Hatıraları, 13.
- 102. Sohrabi, Revolution and Constitutionalism, 61.
- 103. Ibid., 75.

- 104. Ferit, "Bir Mektup," 51.
- Mustafa Aksakal, "Not 'by Those Old Books of International Law But Only by War," 510.
- 106. See Miguel Cabo and Fernando Molina, "The Long and Winding Road of Nationalization."
- 107. Erik J. Zürcher, "Ottoman Sources of Kemalist Thought," 16.
- 108. Sohrabi, *Revolution and Constitutionalism*, 47. The notion of bureaucratic perfection was realized not only through purges in the ranks but also by reorganizing the various ministries and government agencies, leading to the removal of a number of suboffices or their merger in the ministries, thus increasing the bureaucratic efficiency, at least in theory. According to Hüseyin Cahit, this was the process of refounding the state: Hüseyin Cahit, "Hükümet İşi ve Kalem Mu'amelatı," *Tanin*, sene 1, numaro 274, 25 Mayıs 325 (June 7, 1909) 1.
- 109. Sohrabi, Revolution and Constitutionalism, 223.
- 110. For earlier references to bureaucratic purges, see Hüseyin Cahit, "Da'irelerde Tensikat," *Tanin*, sene 1, numaro 18, 5 Ağustos 1324 (August 18, 1908), 1. For more information on different phases of bureaucratic purges, see Abdulhamit Kırmızı, "Meşrutiyette İstibdat Kadroları."
- 111. Ahmet Ali Gazel, "Dersim Mebusu Lütfi Fikri Beyin 'Selanikte Bir Konferans' Adlı Risalesi," 297–98.
- 112. Abdulhamit Kırmızı, Abdülhamid'in Valileri, 15–16.
- 113. F. Rezan Hürmen, ed., "Bir Devlet Adamının" Mehmet Tevfik Bey'in (Biren), 77.
- 114. "Askerlerimiz Ne Olmalı," in *Volkan*, 3 Kanunievvel 1324, numara 6, in *İkinci Meşrutiyetin İlk Ayları*, ed. Düzdağ, 28–29.
- 115. Eugen Weber, Peasants into Frenchmen, 32.
- 116. Ferit, "Bir Mektup," 52.
- 117. Ahmet Refik, Kafkas Yollarında İki Komite İki Kıtal, 147; F. Rezan Hürmen, ed., "Bir Devlet Adamının" Mehmet Tevfik Bey'in, 113.
- 118. Bernard S. Silberman, "The Bureaucratic State in Japan," 230.
- 119. Hanioğlu, Preparation for a Revolution, 298.
- 120. Ibid., 298-99; Kayalı, Arabs and Young Turks, 210-11.
- 121. Hanioğlu, A Brief History, 202.
- 122. Mikhail Dolbilov, "Russification and the Bureaucratic Mind in the Russian Empire's Northwestern Region in the 1860s."
- 123. Rıza Nur, Hayat ve Hatıratım, 334.
- 124. Hanioğlu, A Brief History, 202.
- 125. Talat Paşa noted that the principles of equality and liberty, as preached by the revolution, were against the vested interests of various Ottoman communities as well as the Ottoman ancien régime, which became apparent in the immediate aftermath of the revolution: ("Müsavat ve hürriyet onların maksat ve menfaatlerine mugayirdi"): Bolayır, *Talat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 14–15.
- 126. Abdulhamit Kırmızı, "Going Round the Province for Progress and Prosperity," 397.
- 127. Hanioğlu, A Brief History, 200.
- 128. Hüseyin Cahit, the editor of *Tanin*, asked rhetorically "was there still a government, a sultan? Not immediately obvious.... Istanbul was like an empty hilltop, without an owner. Since yesterday, there has been no censorship; no security personnel are around. The government is mute": Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın, Siyasal Anılar, 15.

- 129. "Bu babda gözümüzün önünde iki kanlı numune var. Biri Rusya'nın birinci Duma'sı, diğeri İran'ın zavallı parlementosu": Hüseyin Cahit, "İntihabatın Suret-i İcrası Hakkında Tahkikat": *Tanin*, sene 1, numaro 9, 27 Temmuz 1324 (August 9, 1908), 1; Sohrabi, *Revolution and Constitutionalism*, 133–34.
- 130. Hanioğlu, Preparation for a Revolution, 280-83.
- 131. Zürcher, Turkey, 97-99.
- 132. Hüseyin Cahit, "Yeni Hey'eti Vükela," *Tanin*, sene 1, numaro 7, 25 Temmuz 1324 (August 7, 1908), 1; Hüseyin Cahit, "İntihabat," *Tanin*, sene 1, numaro 8, 26 Temmuz 1324 (August 8, 1908), 1.
- 133. Feroz Ahmad, "Unionist Relations with the Greek, Armenian, and Jewish Communities of the Ottoman Empire," 403.
- 134. Ibid., 407 (quotation); Hasan Taner Kerimoğlu, İttihat-Terakki ve Rumlar, 63–65.
- 135. Ahmad, "Unionist Relations," 407-8.
- 136. Quoted in Kayalı, Arabs and Young Turks, 87.
- 137. Ahmad, "Unionist Relations," 407-9.
- 138. Ibid., 418.
- 139. Rıza Nur, Hayat ve Hatıratım, 331.
- 140. Arsen Avagyan, "İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti ile Ermeni Siyasi Partileri Arasındaki İlişkiler," in Arsen Avagyan and Gaidz F. Minassian, Ermeniler ve İttihat Terakk, 36–37.
- 141. Ibid., 53-55.
- 142. Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, 285; Tarık Zafer Tunaya, *Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler*, 67–74.
- 143. Sohrabi, Revolution and Constitutionalism, 225.
- 144. Avagyan, "İttihat ve Terakki," 69-71.
- 145. "İstanbul'da efsad ve tahrik ettiği asi askerlerin kurşunu meclis-i mebusanı delik deşik ederken taşralarda muhtelif merkezlerde de umumi kıtaller hazırlanmıştı. Adana, Trabzon, Sivas, Erzurum, Ankara ilah": Hüseyin Cahit, "Adana Hadisesi," *Tanin*, sene 1, numaro 259, 10 Mayıs 325 (May 23, 1909), 1.
- 146. Sahara, "A Hidden Agenda," 116–26. No doubt the subsequent nationalist historiographies drew a very different picture. Garabet K. Moumdjian, "Reevaluating the April 1909 Adana Ordeal."
- 147. Zürcher, *Turkey*, 104-5.
- 148. Ahmad, The Young Turks, 61.
- 149. Some members of the Ottoman parliament such as Rıza Tevfik Bey and Pandelaki Kozmidi Efendi directly confronted the government and the minister of the interior (at the time Talat Paşa) about assassinations (of Ahmed Samim Bey, a journalist) and imprisonments (of Rıza Nur, a member of the parliament), leading to heated verbal duels. *Meclis-i Mebusan Zabıt Ceridesi*, İçtima Senesi 3, Devre 1, vol. 1, 10. İnikad, 20 Teşrinisani 1326 (December 3, 1910), 286–88, 292–94.
- 150. Sir Gerard Lowther et al., "Memorandum: Annual Report on Turkey for the Year 1909 (31 Jan 1909)," in Kenneth Bourne and Cameron Watt, eds., British Documents on Foreign Affairs, 113.
- 151. Ahmad, "Unionist Relations," 412-14.
- 152. Rıza Nur, Hayat ve Hatıratım, 333.
- Mehmet Hacısalihoğlu, "İçerme ve Dışlama," 96–98; Ahmad, "Unionist Relations," 413.

- 154. Erik J. Zürcher, "The Ottoman Conscription System in Theory and Practice," 89.
- 155. Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, 300; Kayalı, *Arabs and Young Turks*, 83–84. Particularly the Ottoman Turkish liberals tended to see the CUP's centralizing policies as attempts of Turkification. For instance, Ali Kemal Bey, mentioned earlier in relation to his response to Yusuf Akçura, was an Ottoman liberal and supporter of the Prince Sabahaddin faction in the Young Turk movement that supported decentralization (*adem-i merkeziyetçilik*). Ali Kemal was once an editor of the newspaper *İkdam*. With the emergence of the Liberal Union (Osmanlı Ahrar Fırkası) in opposition to the CUP in the aftermath of the revolution, he became a member of the opposition. In his later writings Ali Kemal criticized the Young Turks and the Ankara Government on the grounds that both tried to undermine the İttihad-i Anasir (Unity of Elements) and were trying to transform the Ottoman Empire so that the Turks would emerge as millet-i hakime (the dominant nation) at the expense of other ethnic and religious groups across the empire. Bülent Çukurova, "Büyük Taarruz Günlerinde Ali Kemal," 359–60.
- 156. "Rum gazetelerinde gördüğümüz şikayetlerden biri Türklerin anasır-ı saireyi 'türkleştirmek' emelinde bulunmaları idi": Hüseyin Cahit, "Gayrimüslimlerin Askerliği Münasebetiyle," *Tanin*, sene 1, numaro 257, 8 Mayıs 325 (May 21, 1909), 1; Henry Morgenthau, *Ambassador Morgenthau's Story*, 290–91.
- 157. Great Britain, National Archives (formerly Public Record Office), Cabinet Papers (hereafter CAB) 24/33, Intelligence Bureau, October 1917, Memo: Report on the Pan-Turanian Movement, October 1917, p. 16. Cemal Paşa's policies of provisioning the food supply as well as his attempts at containing the politically conscious Arab nationalist elites should be considered within the broader Ottoman assertion of political and military influence over Greater Syria during the war years.
- H. Knatchbull-Hugessen, "Memorandum: Young Turk Regime (16 May 1911)," in British Documents on Foreign Affairs, ed. Kenneth Bourne and D. Cameron Watt, 263–68.
- 159. Kayalı, Arabs and Young Turks, 91-92.
- 160. For instance, even Ronald Grigor Suny, the author of one of the most critical surveys of the literature pertaining to the period, yields to the teleology when he argues that "World War I provided both stimulus and opportunity": Ronald Grigor Suny, "Writing Genocide," 39.
- 161. Fikret Adanır, "Non-Muslims in the Ottoman Army and the Ottoman Defeat in the Balkan War of 1912–1913," 125 (emphasis added).
- 162. See Mustafa Aksakal, *The Ottoman Road to War in 1914*; Reynolds, *Shattering Empires*. Also see Bolayır, *Talat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 23–24.
- 163. Reynolds, Shattering Empires, 110 (quotation), 116–17; Aksakal, The Ottoman Road to War in 1914, 127–29.
- 164. Ebru Boyar, Ottomans, Turks and the Balkans; Yavuz, "The Balkan Wars as a Catalyst of Homogenization."
- 165. Ülker, "Contextualising 'Turkification," 624–30.
- 166. Zafer Toprak, "Bir Hayal Ürünü," 17–22.
- 167. See Sevin Nişanyan, Hayali Coğrafyalar.
- 168. Reynolds, Shattering Empires, 151.
- 169. Anscombe, "Conclusion," 541–52.

- 170. Rodogno, Against Massacre, 89-90.
- 171. Ferit, "Bir Mektup," 52.
- 172. For instance, see Selim Deringil, "'The Armenian Question Is Finally Closed." See also his book *Conversion and Apostasy in the Late Ottoman Empire*.
- 173. Reynolds, Shattering Empires, 18.
- 174. According to Talat Paşa, the Ottoman Empire emerged out of the First Balkan War rather weak and had no say in its future. The London Conference in this sense was an application of the notion that "might was superior to right" ("kuvvet hakkan üstündür"). It was only with the Second Balkan War that the empire invaded parts of the lost territories through its might and right ("hak ve kuvvetine dayanarak"). Bolayır, *Talat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 18–19. Also see Aksakal, "Not 'by Those Old Books of International Law."
- 175. Hakan Yavuz sees this transformation as dating back to earlier decades. For him, the non-Muslim communities, particularly the Armenians, came to be perceived "as an existential threat" from the Treaty of Berlin in 1878 onward: Yavuz, "The Transformation of 'Empire' through Wars and Reforms," 35–37.
- 176. Ahmad, The Young Turks, 135-37.
- 177. Kayalı, Arabs and Young Turks, 141-13.
- 178. Ginio, "Mobilizing the Ottoman Nation."
- 179. Şener Aktürk, "Persistence of the Islamic Millet as an Ottoman Legacy," 893.
- 180. See Erik J. Zürcher, "The Vocabulary of Muslim Nationalism."
- 181. See, for instance, Mustafa Kemal's letter on behalf of the National Congress of Sivas to the U.S. Senate: Mustafa Kemal, "To the President of the Senate of the United States of America," September 9, 1919, in *Atatürk'ün Milli Dış Politikası*, 87–89.
- 182. "Nation" in the modern sense of the word is *kavm* in Ottoman Turkish. Ahmed Cevdet Paşa saw them as synonymous: "[E]tdiği sırada bir '*Nationalitê*' [=] kavmiyyet mes'elesi meydana koydu": Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, *Ma'ruzat*, 42.
- 183. In terms of the precariousness of national borders, striking similar examples can be found elsewhere, such as in the formulation of the distinction between China Proper and Greater China. For the Chinese example, see two articles in the same volume: Joseph W. Esherick, "How the Qing Became China" and Uradyn E. Bulag, "Going Imperial."
- 184. Sina Akşin notes in passing that "its [the National Pact's] error in laying claim to Arab territories themselves was lightened by the provision for a plebiscite in the territories": Sina Akşin, *Turkey: From Empire to Revolutionary Republic*, 147. For an insightful analysis of the National Pact, see Sezgi Durgun, *Memalik-i Şahane'den Vatan'a*, 129–52.
- 185. Howard Eissestat, "Book Review of A Question of Genocide," 586.
- 186. Alan Sked, *The Decline and Fall of the Habsburg Empire*, 302.
- 187. Benedict Anderson, "Western Nationalism and Eastern Nationalism," 32, 35.
- 188. For a preliminary inquiry into the ways in which the Ottoman state defined its relationship vis-à-vis its periphery, see Selim Deringil, "They Live in a State of Nomadism and Savagery."
- 189. Weber, Peasants into Frenchmen, 3-22; Mark D. Steinberg, "Russia's Fin de Siècle," 91.
- 190. Selim Deringil, The Well-Protected Domains, 171.

- 191. See David Blackbourn and Geoff Eley, The Peculiarities of German History.
- 192. Dolbilov made similar concluding remarks for the processes of Russification. See Dolbilov, "Russification and the Bureaucratic Mind," 271.
- 193. Suny, "Writing Genocide," 34.
- 194. A possible solution of the Armenian Question, formulated by the Great Powers, has been perceived as an existential threat for some time by the Ottomans. One Ottoman document illustrates the point. The document first establishes a clear connection between what has happened in the Ottoman Balkans since the late 1870s and what could happen in eastern Anatolia in the near future and its existential implications for the Ottomans: the "Armenian affair is not like the Bulgarian or the Serbian affairs, because it has arisen in Anatolia which is the crucible of Ottoman power." Cited in Deringil, "'The Armenian Question,'" 349.
- 195. Hilmar Kaiser, "Regional Resistance to Central Government Policies," 187, 203.
- 196. Ibid.; Uğur Ümit Üngör, "Book Review of Taner Akçam's *The Young Turks' Crime against Humanity*."

Revisiting Dominant Paradigms on a Young Turk Leader

Ahmed Riza

Erdem Sönmez

Ahmed Riza is considered to be a major ideologue and intellectual and one of the most significant leaders of the Young Turk movement. His political and intellectual portrait is particularly noteworthy because he stood between two generations of constitutionalism: the Young Ottomans and the Unionists. Moreover, after the 1908 revolution, he was elected to be the Speaker of the parliament in deference to his longtime efforts in opposition to the Hamidian regime. He was later appointed as a member of the senate.

Ahmed Riza was born in 1858 in Istanbul, to a father who was nicknamed "English" and an Austrian mother who was a convert to Islam. After graduating from the Mekteb-i Sultani (Imperial School), he worked and received his informal training in the Tercüme Odasi (Translation Bureau) as many of the Young Ottomans had done before him. Within a relatively short time span he went to France to study agriculture. Upon returning to the Ottoman Empire, he applied to the Ministry of Education because no suitable position at the Ministry of Agriculture was available at the time. He was appointed to the National Education Office in Bursa. Not content with his appointment, he resigned during his visit to Paris for the centennial exhibition of the French Revolution. While in Paris, Riza wrote six reform bills and submitted them to Sultan Abdülhamid II, only to be ignored. Despite the silence from Yıldız Palace, he published the first of these reform bills and shortly thereafter joined the ranks of the Young Turk movement. Most importantly, perhaps, he was

the name-giver of the Osmanlı İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti (Ottoman Committee of Union and Progress: CUP).

During the opposition years Ahmed Riza's intellectual framework and political attitude bore traces of the generations that came before and after him. As in the case of the Young Ottomans, his constitutionalist opposition and propaganda in Paris are considered to be mainly an intellectual activity rather than an organizational action of the Unionists. Islam, which was treated with great importance by the Young Ottomans, was replaced by positivism in the political thought of Ahmed Riza, in line with the spirit of his time. He nevertheless pointed out the benefits of the religion for the sake of progress, as did the Young Ottomans. Moreover, he emphasized the importance of education, another significant theme apparent in the writings of the Young Ottomans. Intellectually, Riza was not as sophisticated as the Young Ottomans; yet he was not eclectic like the Unionists either.

Riza's relationship with the "state circles" resembled that of the Unionists rather than the Young Ottomans. His understanding of opposition and his relations with the palace were not flexible (as was the case with the Young Ottomans) but rather intransigent. He also had an organic bond with the constitutionalist generation that came after him via the key figures Doctor Nazım (his protégé) and Bahattin Şakir. He persistently opposed adopting militaristic solutions, whereas the Second Constitutional period was attained through violence employed by the Unionists. Last but not the least, while a proponent of Ottomanism, he did not lean toward the idea of Turkish nationalism. In comparison with Ziya Gökalp, Ahmed Rıza was considered to be a much more cosmopolitan Ottoman intellectual.

These instances illustrate the continuities and breaks in the two constitutionalist movements in the Ottoman Empire (any further discussion is beyond the scope of this study). Therefore this chapter attempts only to highlight the main characteristics of Ahmed Rıza's political thought and attitudes. For this purpose I first scrutinize the dominant narrative on the 1902 congress in the literature, which contains many prejudgments about Ahmed Rıza that need revision. Second, I seek to examine the preconceptions of the literature that characterized Ahmed Rıza as a Turkish nationalist and a militaristic pro-coup figure. Finally, I concentrate on his approach on the European intervention, another significant feature of his political activity. Analyzing these aspects is also useful in contextualizing the Young Turk movement and reviewing the current literature from a critical perspective.

THE CONGRESS OF OTTOMAN LIBERALS AND AHMED RIZA

At the turn of the twentieth century two prominent members of the Ottoman administration, İsmail Kemal and Damad Mahmud Paşa, joined the Young Turk movement. İsmail Kemal was a close friend and a colleague of Midhat Paşa, and Damad Mahmud Paşa was the former minister of justice, ambassador, and son-in-law of Abdülhamid II. Their participation undoubtedly revitalized the opposition movement. After arriving in Europe with his sons Sabahaddin and Lütfullah, Damad Mahmud Paşa came into contact with the Geneva organization of the Committee of Union and Progress and started to write in Osmanlı (Ottoman), the newspaper of the organization. Mehmet Hacısalihoğlu states that the chief aim of Damad Mahmud Paşa and İsmail Kemal was to provide British assistance in bringing down the Hamidian regime in 1900–1901. ⁶ This revival evoked suggestions from the Young Turks for organizing a congress to bring together various factions of the opposition. Eventually the Congress of Ottoman Liberals was convened in Paris in February 1902 at the initiative of Sabahaddin and Lütfullah.8

The 1902 congress, however, was not able to unite the constitutionalist movement. On the contrary, the factions within the Young Turks came into conflict with each other on the issues of the Great Powers' intervention and the military involvement in reinstating the constitutional regime. The first of these issues particularly caused fierce debates and divided the Young Turk movement into two major fronts: the *müdahaleci* (interventionist) faction, called *ekseriyet* (majority) and the *adem-i müdahaleci* (noninterventionist) group, called *ekalliyet* (minority).

There is a consensus in the current literature that this dividing line at the congress occurred between the groups led by Sabahaddin and Ahmed Riza. To For instance, according to François Georgeon, Sabahaddin was a "confirmed liberal" and a "decentralist." Ahmed Riza (the main exponent of the opposing view), in contrast, was a "Turkish nationalist" and a "centralist." Accordingly, the central argument in the existing literature is that "Ottoman liberalism" faced off against "Turkish nationalism" at the 1902 congress. Hence, as can be observed in the following examples, the Young Turk movement was bifurcated between these two camps based on a dichotomy of centralism versus decentralism:

In the midst of all this confusion stood Sabahaddin, who was beginning to formulate his idea of an Ottoman Confederation in

which the various nationalities of the Empire would have a great measure of autonomy and in which the main bond would be the dynasty. At the other extreme were Ahmed Riza and his associates who...represented a Turkish nationalism which admitted only that the reigning Sultan was evil and maintained that the solution to everything was to replace him with another member of the same family and revive the constitution which had been suspended in 1878.¹²

For Sabahaddin, the solution for the nations that had centrifugal tendencies was a liberal decentralization. Ahmed Riza, on the contrary, defended [the view] that only an authoritarian centralism could prevent the dissolution of the empire.... The controversy became obvious at the Congress of Ottoman Liberals that convened in Paris in February 1902.... The very reason for the Young Turks to adopt Turkish nationalism was to provide the domination of the Turkish element over others through coercion, assimilation, etc. This tendency was apparent in Ahmed Riza.¹³

At the congress...CUP divided into two factions. The liberal group led by Prince Sabahaddin established the League of Private Initiative and Decentralization [Teşebbüs-i Şahsi ve Adem-i Merkeziyet Cemiyeti] and the other faction organized the CPU under the leadership of Ahmed Riza.¹⁴

[T]he difference between his [Ahmed Rıza's] party and that of Prince Sabahaddin begins to crystallize from now onwards as one between Turkish nationalism and Ottoman liberalism.¹⁵

In contrast to the centralist, authoritarian, rationalist...attitude of Ahmed Rıza and his followers, Prince Sabahaddin was a representative of decentralist, empiricist, pragmatist, and liberal political doctrine.¹⁶

This discord in the literature has created a hegemonic narrative on Turkish political life: two controversial lines that emerged at the 1902 congress have played a dominant role in the political life of Turkey from 1902 onward. Although Tarık Zafer Tunaya was the first to point out this dichotomous schema, ¹⁷ İdris Küçükömer laid a stronger emphasis on it. ¹⁸ In addition, Şerif Mardin also took up this approach, refining and strengthening it. ¹⁹

This narrative stresses that a Turkish nationalist, centralist, authoritarian, militarist, and pro-coup political line, ranging from the CUP to the Republican People's Party and the Nationalist Action Party, stemmed from the stance taken by Ahmed Riza and his followers at the 1902 congress. In contrast, Sabahaddin and his associates initiated a liberal, decentralist, and anti-coup political position, which has been represented by a wide range of organizations, including the League of Private Initiative and Decentralization, the Party of Ottoman Liberals, the Party of Freedom and Understanding, the Democratic Party, the Justice Party, the Motherland Party, and the Justice and Development Party. Although this dichotomous model could be regarded as functional for analyzing Turkish political life, it must be noted that these interpretations, and thereby the positions attributed to Ahmed Riza and Sabahaddin at the 1902 congress, have substantially been teleological.

It is useful to reconsider the historical accounts themselves. İsmail Kemal's mention of the congress's organizing process is particularly noteworthy:

Prince Saba Eddine and Prince Lutfullah...they were planning the calling of a congress to discuss the situation of Turkey. They wanted me to take part in this, and Prince Lutfullah came to Brussels to see me on the matter. I was willing to take part in the congress on certain conditions—namely, that all the ethnical elements in Turkey should be represented, so that the desiderata of all the people of the Empire might be formulated.... My second condition was that the Powers signatory of the Treaties of Paris and Berlin should know that in the eyes of the Ottoman people they had pledged their honour concerning the adoption of reforms for the good of the Empire. If the aid of Europe were invoked, the congress might be of some value, but if it stopped at the mere expression of opinions and nothing more was done, I could not see any use in it.... My conditions were, however, accepted, and I came to Paris.²⁰

Ahmet Bedevi Kuran, a disciple of Sabahaddin, also described the debates at the congress:

Two issues were discussed during the negotiation: (a) A revolution cannot be made solely by propaganda and publication. Therefore, an effort toward military involvement in the revolutionary movement must be provided. (b) Reformation must be attained

in the empire by means of European intervention. This first point was suggested by İsmail Kemal, who claimed to be representing an important military force at the congress.... The second point was proposed by the Armenians.... After these two issues gave rise to heated debates, two points of view emerged: "interventionist" and... "noninterventionist." As Prince Sabahaddin mentioned, interventionists were the majority. This faction was led by İsmail Kemal. Ahmed Rıza was the leader of the noninterventionist group. In this way the congress divided into two fronts. ²¹

Moreover, Yahya Kemal shed light in his memoirs on the discussions at the congress:

İsmail Kemal was the preeminent person of the congress.... The congress was divided into two factions when the intervention of a Great Power such as Britain came into question. The followers of İsmail Kemal and Sabahaddin regarded demanding foreign intervention to end the Hamidian rule as a civilized action. Ahmed Rıza, Doctor Nazım, Halil Ganem, and their friends fully repudiated this. In effect the real rivalry at the congress was between Ahmed Rıza and İsmail Kemal.²²

Soon after the congress, on April 16, 1902, Sabahaddin published an article in *Osmanlı* about the dividing lines that surfaced at the congress:

The minority faction declared as follows: "The Constitution is the guarantor for all kinds of happiness and salvation of the diverse peoples of the Ottoman Empire. We do not need the Great Powers' assistance. Moreover, this assistance will be unfavorable for us.... This kind of assistance will weigh heavily on our national honor.... We should rely on and believe in ourselves." The majority: "The Constitution is our noble wish. The intervention of Europe will occur inevitably.... The peoples of the Ottoman Empire will demand European assistance in unison." 23

These debates were also portrayed in a more recent study:

Although the delegates were unanimously opposed to the Hamidian rule, they suggested completely different courses of action to change the regime. There were two problems at the center of these debates. İsmail Kemal proposed collaboration with the army, with

the conviction that it was not possible to make a revolution solely by propaganda and the press. The other issue was on the intervention of foreign powers.²⁴

Another monograph further stated that the congress divided the Young Turks into "interventionists" and "noninterventionists": "İsmail Kemal represented the former and Ahmed Rıza the latter." İsmail Kemal was the head of the interventionists, as Hilmi Ziya Ülken underlined, and the other faction was led by Ahmed Rıza.²⁵

Soon after the congress the interventionists established the Ottoman Freedom-Lovers Committee (Osmanlı Hürriyetperveran Cemiyeti) under the leadership of İsmail Kemal.²⁶ This also corroborates my conclusion that Kemal was leading the interventionist front. After all, his senior position made him better suited than Sabahaddin to lead the interventionist group at the congress: he was fifteen years older than Ahmed Rıza and thirty-five years older than Sabahaddin. Besides, he had been a colleague of Midhat Paşa and previously had been offered the leadership of the committee by İshak Sükuti.²⁷ It is important to note in this light that seven years later Ahmed Rıza would be replaced by İsmail Kemal, not Sabahaddin, as the chair of the parliament during the March 31 Movement.²⁸

To argue against the divide between the "centralists" and the "decentralists" that is said to have occurred at the congress it is imperative to note that Sabahaddin began shifting his focus to decentralism and set out to defend decentralist ideas only around 1906, not on the eve of the 1902 congress.²⁹ Also, Sabahaddin established the League of Private Initiative and Decentralization not just after the congress but instead in 1906.

To sum up, the Young Turks discussed mainly two issues during the congress. The first was proposed by İsmail Kemal and related to the collaboration with military forces. The second debate was about the Great Powers' assistance in bringing down Hamidian rule, for which İsmail Kemal and Damad Mahmud Paşa had been striving since 1900.³⁰ Ahmed Rıza, however, was the leader of the "noninterventionist" group at the congress and an opponent of any application of violence.

A TURKISH NATIONALIST OR AN OTTOMAN PATRIOT?

Existing studies mostly characterize Ahmed Rıza as a Turkish nationalist, as noted.³¹ My own purpose here is to reexamine this approach and focus on Ahmed Rıza within the context of Ottomanist ideology.

Riza published a programmatic text in the first issue of *Mechveret* and explained the objectives of the committee: "We do not demand reforms for any particular province. We demand reforms for the whole empire. We do not demand reforms for any specific group, such as Jews, Christians, or Muslims. We demand reforms for all Ottomans." ³²

According to Ahmed Riza, whatever their religion or nation, all inhabitants of the empire were "Ottoman." "Without discriminating against any nation or religion," he called for the "unification of all Ottomans" to regenerate the empire by restoring the constitutional and parliamentarian regime that would represent every Ottoman.³³ The transition from autocracy to constitutional monarchy not only would provide a rejuvenation of the state but would obstruct nationalist currents within the empire, for which absolutism prepared the ground.³⁴ "Instead of serving the absolutist regime by struggling against each other," Ahmed Riza stressed that the different elements in the Ottoman Empire "must unite to change the Hamidian regime." Although the "Hamidian rule alienated the Christians from the Ottoman Empire," "the most pressing duty of the day" was "to invite each and every Ottoman to unite." He defended the position that this was the only way to dethrone Abdülhamid II, who "sought to separate Christians from Muslims."

Nevertheless, this particular emphasis on the unity of Muslim and non-Muslim elements in the empire sometimes caused tensions and factionalisms within the Young Turk movement. In this context growing disputes on the Armenian Question generated a harsh debate between Ahmed Rıza and Mizancı Murad. The key difference was Murad's support for the Hamidian regime in regard to the Armenian issue, ³⁷ whereas Riza accused the palace of the massacres and sought to collaborate with Armenian organizations against Hamidian rule.³⁸ Moreover, he showed a similar attitude on the Cretan question. In contrast to Murad and his followers, Ahmed Rıza held the Hamidian "autocracy" responsible for the uprising in Crete, rather than the Cretans or the European powers.³⁹ Furthermore, he often warned the Young Turks against any Turkist tendency by stating that "it is harmful to propagandize Turkishness or Islam" in our country because the people are not composed of a single element, religion, and nation." 40 For Ahmed Rıza, the peoples of the Ottoman Empire would find the salvation of their country only in the union of all Ottomans. This staunch Ottomanist position would evoke criticisms directed at him by the Turkists of subsequent generations. For instance, Kazım Karabekir portrayed him as "cosmopolitan" and "a person who completely lost his nationalist feelings." 41 Yahya Kemal described Rıza as "too much Ottoman" and noted that he did not adopt Turkish identity. 42

Erik J. Zürcher argues that the Ottomanist position of Ahmed Rıza started to change at the turn of the century and that he endorsed Turkish nationalism in time. 43 M. Şükrü Hanioğlu contends that Turkism was one of the most crucial common denominators of the groups that would constitute Şura-yı Ümmet (Council of the People) in 1902, including Ahmed Rıza's Mesveret (Consultation). 44 He also asserts that the Young Turks had already begun to emphasize the priority and importance of the Turkish element against others within the empire before 1902. Hanioğlu bases his argument on the idea laid out in Mesveret as follows. 45 "Among the developed nations and even those that are not developed, the right to rule is in the hands of that nation which constitutes the largest community in a society. Why should Turkey be an exception to this rule?"46 According to him, their tendency toward Turkism strengthened step by step until Turkism finally crystallized as the Young Turk movement's predominant ideology between 1902 and 1905. 47 Nonetheless, by late 1907 the leadership of the Young Turk organization perceived the difficulty in carrying out a revolution by promoting a "strong Turkist ideology." Therefore the Young Turks temporarily abandoned Turkism, and in Hanioğlu's view this should be viewed as a tactical move.⁴⁸

The text in *Meşveret* that underscored the priority of the Turkish element within the empire and thus formed the mainstay of Hanioğlu's approach, however, was in fact not an article published in the newspaper: it was a reader's letter that had been sent to the paper. Furthermore, the editorial board of the newspaper annotated the letter, although presumably the annotation was dictated by Ahmed Rıza himself: "We received several letters on the Armenian issue. They are mainly concerned with aims and intensions of the Armenians. We have published one of them as a sample. These letters complain about... Armenian demands for autonomy.... We request an explanation on this issue from Armenian committees in order to avoid any careless statements and hesitation." ⁴⁹

Considering this letter as a mirror for the political thought of the Young Turk movement is quite problematic. Hanioğlu's claim about Şura-yı Ümmet's Turkism is also debatable because one of the most important components of the newspaper was *Kürdistan*, published between 1898 and 1902 by Mikdad Midhat Bedirhan.

Nevertheless, Ottomanism, Turkism, and Islamism cannot be sharply separated from one another, as Hanioğlu pointed out, because each of them included elements of the others. Therefore some aspects within Ottomanism later would also contribute to shape Turkish nationalism. This perspective facilitates an understanding of how the pioneers of Turkism emerged from within the Young Turk movement. Moreover,

Hanioğlu's approach illuminates the existence of Islamist and Turkist elements within the Young Turk organization. This viewpoint also explains foundations such as Uhuvvet-i İslamiye Cemiyeti (Association of Islamic Brotherhood),⁵⁰ which had been founded by the CPU before 1908 with the aim of building unity among Muslims.

It is important, however, to note in this context that Ottomanism, Turkism, and Islamism were political projects. Thus each of them determined separate regime strategies and alliance politics. Obscuring differences among these three ideologies complicates our understanding of the Young Turks' political projects, regime strategies, and alliance politics in this period. When Ottomanism, Islamism, and Turkism are analyzed as political projects and the regime strategies of the Young Turks are taken into consideration, it can be asserted that the idea of the adoption of Ottomanism as a tactical move is controversial. The crucial point is that Turkism did not provide a purposeful political project for the Young Turk movement and consequently did not evoke a convenient politics of alliance after 1902, when the major goal of the Young Turks was the promulgation of the constitution and the dethronement of Abdülhamid II during the years leading up to 1908. Thus Turkism could never find its expression in the programmatic texts of the Young Turk movement. In a similar vein, despite the existence of Turkist elements within the Young Turk opposition, Yusuf Akçura's work Üç Tarz-ı Siyaset (Three Types of Policy, the first manifesto of Turkish nationalism) did not receive any attention from the Young Turks, illustrating the gulf between Akçura's work and the goals of the constitutionalist movement.⁵¹ Shifts in the dominant ideologies of the Second Constitutional period (such as Islamism and Turkism after the Balkan Wars and the Armenian expulsion, respectively) corroborate that Ottomanism, Islamism, and Turkism should be analyzed in the context of the political project/regime strategy. The framework of this political project/regime strategy is much more decisive and explanatory for conceiving the ideological orientations of the Young Turk movement than personal attitudes. For instance, even Behaettin Şakir, who christened his son "Gökalp,"52 was personally a Turkish nationalist but could still write scripts that were quite harmonious with the political agenda of the Young Turk movement before 1907. The following can hardly be characterized as a tactical move:

Our occupation and program are obvious.... It is to unite...Turkish, Kurdish, Bulgarian, Arab, Armenian, etc., citizens, a unity

that will be attained only by a constitutional government. This country belongs neither to the Turks nor to Bulgarians or Arabs. It belongs to everyone who calls himself an Ottoman. Whoever accepts and confirms this reality, regardless of his religion and nation, is a fellow compatriot. Anyone who thinks on the contrary, that is, whoever seeks to divide the country into different nations, is our opponent and enemy, even if he be Turkish. Unlike the other committees of various Muslim and Christian nations, ours is not a "nationalist" party, heeding only nationalist interests.⁵³

In the light of these notes on the ideological positions of the Young Turk movement and Ahmed Riza, it is no coincidence that he did not participate in the associations such as Türk Derneği (Turkish Association), Türk Yurdu (Turkish Homeland), and Türk Ocağı (Turkish Hearth), all of which preached cultural or political Turkism in the Second Constitutional period. More importantly, he criticized the Armenian and Greek expulsions during World War I, when he was a member and later the head of the Ottoman senate. Fraza wrote that he was completely against Turkism because "it separate[d] Turks from the other Ottoman elements and consequently ruin[ed] fraternity among them." In his view "Turkism not only [was] hazardous for the state policy but also [was] contrary to the laws." As a result it is difficult to picture Ahmed Riza as a Turkish nationalist: he should be considered in the frame of Ottomanism.

DISAPPROVAL OF THE USE OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE

As noted, existing literature mostly focuses on Ahmed Riza within a militarist and pro-coup context. Current studies underline that he and his followers initiated an authoritarian, pro-coup, and militarist political line. But Ahmed Riza and Sabahaddin were indeed thoroughly distanced from the positions attributed to them. In contrast to Sabahaddin and İsmail Kemal, who established the Ottoman Freedom-Lovers Committee with the purpose of staging a coup d'état, ⁵⁷ Riza opposed the use of means of violence and refused to take part in any such measure. Therefore he took great pains to separate himself from the "activists" within the Young Turk movement.

Ahmed Rıza's reluctance to employ militarist solutions drew criticism over his leadership within the constitutionalist movement. For instance, Tunalı Hilmi criticized Rıza for not being a proponent of the revolution and action and believed that the present situation called for nothing less than bloodshed.⁵⁸ Some figures within the Young Turk movement believed that the most direct way to reach "salvation" was an uprising, stating that there was no other way.⁵⁹ Ahmed Riza presented them with a clear answer: "If the people do not have the ability to understand the importance of the entente of ideas and the progress of civilizations, then the words union, freedom, and law will be degraded to mere phantasms of poetic and desperate actions. No use or benefit would be obtained from the change in administration and government." Furthermore, in a lengthy article entitled "İhtilal" (Revolution) he returned the attacks of the activists:

Most of the letters that I have received from Istanbul and the provinces...stress the necessity of the revolution. They say that "the Committee of Union and Progress does not know its real mission. It does not act.... What nation ever restored freedom without the use of weapons?"...In the old days people were accustomed to attack the palace, shouting, "We do not want [this]" without being aware of what they were doing and why they were rising. With such blindfolded uprisings, it is impossible to make a grand revolution today. The people should have a well-constituted idea and a grand desire, which should channel the people to a political goal. The ancient Greeks, Romans, and Arabs had such goals. The French Revolution was the product of century-old publication activities.... It is easy to agitate the public. Nonetheless, it is difficult to tranquillize a heedless and ill-advised revolution.... The people...revolted in Yemen, Syria, Crete, and Albania. Nevertheless, this rage and agitation remained merely as provocation; they did not evolve into political revolutions.... The dethronement of Sultan Abdülaziz and the promulgation of the Constitution effected grand change. However, this was a revolution made by the endeavors of a few persons and was destroyed together with them. To avoid its ruin, it became imperative to make the entire folk to love the Constitution and be aware of the necessity of a constitutional regime. In England the Constitution is not written in a book but in the memory of the people. It became a right and a property of the people. Everyone in England understands the importance, necessity, and holiness of the Constitution.... Therefore, it is necessary to educate and awaken public opinion and orient all Ottomans to a definite political goal.⁶¹

A counterargument can be suggested: Ahmed Riza's view on violence and activism transformed after the 1902 congress. For instance, Mardin states that Riza began leaning toward the idea of activism and seeking a theoretical explanation for militarism, especially after 1905. ⁶² On balance, however, Rıza was relegated to a passive position within the committee, which obliged him to a great extent to approve the decisions made by the men of action in this period.⁶³ Nevertheless, he tried to distance himself from this particular activism. In his pamphlet Vazife ve Mesuliyet (Mission and Responsibility), which was published in this period, he wrote that progress and civilization were contingent upon law and order. 64 On the eve of 1908 he warned the men of action that this activism would not provide the intended results: "Today the people do not seek their freedom.... Abdülhamid tyrannizes and oppresses the people.... However, he harms the people by means of a group within the people. The people do not move except to destroy and kill their fellow citizens.⁶⁵

The theoretical basis of Ahmed Riza's attitude on violence undoubtedly stemmed from positivism, which rejected the employment of any means that could interrupt the proper progress of the society. It is important to note in this context that he wrote in *Mechveret* as follows: "We want to work, not to overthrow the ruling dynasty, which we consider necessary for the maintenance of good order, but rather to propagate the notion of progress through which we want a peaceful triumph. Our motto is 'Order and Progress.' We find horror in concessions obtained through means of violence." He also had a pragmatic reason for his position against the use of violent means. According to Ahmed Riza, an upheaval would bring the Great Powers' intervention: "A revolution without the unity between the Muslims and the Christians in terms of ideas and ideals would be very harmful for our state, which is under foreign intervention." "

OBJECTION TO THE GREAT POWERS' INTERVENTION

His objection to the European intervention was one of the most distinctive features of Ahmed Rıza's political attitude. He had placed a strong emphasis on this topic since joining the ranks of the Young Turk movement. For instance, he wrote that they opposed the direct intervention of foreign powers in Ottoman authority.⁶⁸

Riza pointed out that any intervention by the Great Powers would be detrimental to the Ottoman Empire rather than being profitable. Therefore he fully repudiated the idea of intervention by the Great Powers. Furthermore, instead of leaning toward European assistance, he sought to promote unity within the empire: "It is obvious that a dethronement with the assistance of foreigners would result in destructive conditions and concessions. Had the Ottomans united without discriminating between religion and nationality...there would be no need for interposition and intervention by the foreigners."

Ahmed Rıza's objection to foreign intervention was also a significant source for his opposition to the Hamidian regime. He accused the Hamidian rule of protecting the foreign companies.⁷¹ Thus his objection to Great Powers intervention also had an economic aspect:

The only Ottoman feature of the Ottoman Bank is its name. Save for its name, it does not have any national designation. Both its administration and capital belong to foreigners. If the National Maritime Line [*idare-i mahsusa*] fails to transmit the percentages that had been pledged for a few years...the Bank would seize first the ferries and then its management, in which case the government would not have the right to sue the Bank.⁷²

It could be argued that Ahmed Riza's opposition to foreign interference contained a Turkist approach, as objection to foreign intervention would later become a significant characteristic of some variants of Turkish nationalism. His opposition did not stem from Turkish nationalism, however: he based his objection to the Great Powers' intervention on the dichotomies of "East" versus "West" and "Islam" versus "Christianity" rather than national loyalties: "The deep abyss between the two parts of the world has been growing day by day, since the Crusades, forcing the peoples of the East to continue to reject everything that comes from the Christian West." "

I wanted the Constitution to be enforced and the capitulations to be abrogated. These demands were not in harmony with the eastern policy of the Europeans. Some people said that "Turks do not put any effort to this matter. Had they taken any course of action they would have attained affinity with Europe." This is not true. Europe does not support Islam. There have been numerous

Islamic revolts in Yemen, Egypt, and India. In European newspapers there is not even a single word in favor of these revolts.⁷⁴

The Crusades...encouraged cruelty...and exhausted the military power of the Islamic states that maintained balance, stability, and confidence. They threw the social and political life into disorder, paralyzed industry and commerce, and finally interrupted the intellectual movement that developed from the seventh century on with much enthusiastic zeal. In addition, the Crusades created a disastrous moral effect on the Muslim world [against Christian Europe] that still continues.⁷⁵

Nevertheless, the dichotomies between East and West or Islam and Christianity never transformed into an anti-Western attitude in the political thought of Ahmed Riza:

We are bound to France by the oeuvres that stand on solid basis that are superior to temporary French politicians...I can only have admiration for the nations that have produced so many masterpieces. When a thought of revolt against Europe inspires me, I seek to follow the tradition of European thinkers. And if I vehemently protest against the acts of some of its rulers, it is because I find them unworthy of the country honored by Descartes, Bacon, Leibniz, Hume, Diderot, Kant, Montesquieu, Condorcet, Bichat, Newton, Auguste Comte, and many others.⁷⁶

Riza stressed that his book attempted to show how eastern societies, due to the eastern policy of the West, more readily began to refuse every development that originated in the West.⁷⁷

It is also important to note the hierarchy in Ahmed Riza's thought between his objection to the use of political violence and his opposition to foreign intervention. From this viewpoint the objection to the Great Powers' assistance was more vital than the opposition to the use of political violence. He approved, though reluctantly, the declaration of the 1907 Congress, which included armed actions. Nonetheless, it must be noted in this context that the precedence given to his objection to foreign interposition should not trivialize his criticism against the use of political violence. As pointed out at the outset Ahmed Riza always took pains to be coherent in his political arguments and positivist ideas. Aside from this

theoretical basis, as an intellectual gradually losing his power and influence, he had to proceed with the men of action within the movement, especially after 1905.⁷⁸

CONCLUSION

After striving many years in the opposition movement, Ahmed Rıza lost his power and was relegated to a passive position within the committee by the *actionnaire* generation that came after him. He was reduced from being a charismatic leader of the CUP to being an eminent member and became a respected elder who had very little influence in decision making.⁷⁹ His attitude on the use of political violence and activism no doubt played an important role in the change of his position within the organization.⁸⁰

Eventually Ahmed Riza did not have a significant impact on the CUP decision that ignited the revolution in 1908.⁸¹ Nonetheless, he was the most prestigious figure in the early stages of the Second Constitutional period because of his longtime efforts in the opposition movement against Hamidian rule. He was named "Ebu'l-ahrar" (father of the freedomlovers) in the welcoming ceremony that was conducted for him when he returned to the Ottoman Empire in the immediate aftermath of the 1908 revolution, after nineteen years of absence.⁸² Shortly thereafter he was elected as chair of the parliament,⁸³ a position that was ineffective in policy making.

Ahmed Riza did not directly participate in practical politics and played the role of a statesman during the Second Constitutional period. In addition to his particular stress on the unification of ethnic and religious elements and Ottomanism, he underscored the importance of the constitutional regime and the rule of law throughout this period. ⁸⁴ In accordance with his emphasis on the supremacy of law and constitutionalism he did not hesitate to criticize the CUP governments. The focal point of this criticism was the "authoritarian and despotic" attitude of the committee. ⁸⁵ In addition he condemned the participation of the Ottoman Empire in World War I. ⁸⁶

Ahmed Riza insisted on his staunchly Ottomanist position even when the dominant ideology of the empire later shifted to Islamism and Turkish nationalism.⁸⁷ He contended that Turkism not only ruined the feeling of kinship among the citizens but also contradicted the laws. He opposed every initiative that could harm the coexistence of different religious or ethnic elements in the empire. It was in this context and from

a supranational perspective that he accused the CUP government of the Armenian expulsion. Although Rıza did not assume a position in policy making, he still headed the Ottoman senate. In official settings he underlined the Ottoman citizenship of the Armenians and that any occurrence of insurgence should be handled through legal means.⁸⁸

All in all, one of the most interesting aspects of Ahmed Riza's case is the strong consistency in both his political thought and practice throughout the long period in which he was politically active. As noted, his opposition to the Hamidian regime was quadripartite, consisting of constitutionalism, Ottomanism, objection to the Great Power intervention, and disapproval of the use of political violence. He carried on his steadfast Ottomanist stance in a political conjuncture in which the CUP and many Young Turks long embraced Turkish nationalism. Thus the reasons why he could not occupy any position in the elite circles of the early Republican period were shaped by the growing gulf between his Ottomanist position and the nationalist paradigm of the new regime. In the end his emphasis on the rule of law and constitutionalism not only opposed the absolutist rule of Abdülhamid II but also was critical of the autocratic policies of the CUP. At a time when ideological and political identities were fluid and permeable, his undeviating line was exceptional.

NOTES

- 1. Ziyad Ebuzziya, "Ahmed Rıza Bey," 124.
- Ahmet Bedevi Kuran, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda İnkılap Hareketleri ve Milli Mücadele, 452.
- Ahmed Rıza, Meclis-i Mebusan ve Ayan Reisi Ahmed Rıza Bey'in Anıları (hereafter Anılar), 9–10.
- Ahmet Bedevi Kuran, İnkılap Tarihimiz ve Jön Türkler, 27; Yuriy Aşatoviç Petrosyan, Sovyet Gözüyle Jön Türkler, 177.
- 5. Ahmed Rıza, *Anılar*, 11; Ebuzziya, "Ahmed Rıza Bey," 124; Kuran, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda İnkılap Hareketleri ve Milli Mücadele*, 153.
- 6. Mehmet Hacısalihoğlu, Jön Türkler ve Makedonya Sorunu, 1890–1918, 86–89.
- Several attempts were made to organize a Young Turk congress in this period. For an example, see Ali Fahri, Yeni Osmanlılar Kongresi (lithograph), 1316.
- 8. François Georgeon, *Abdulhamid II*, 382–83. M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, *Bir Siyasal Düşünür Olarak Abdullah Cevdet ve Dönemi*, 44; Kuran, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda İnkılap Hareketleri ve Milli Mücadele*, 216.
- 9. M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, 3–4; Kuran, *İnkılap Tarihimiz ve Jön Türkler*, 152; Sina Akşin, *Jön Türkler ve İttihat ve Terakki*, 62–63.
- For example, see Tarık Zafer Tunaya, Türkiye'de Siyasal Gelişmeler (1836–1938): Kanun-1 Esasi ve Meşrutiyet Dönemi, vol. 1, 2nd ed. (Istanbul: Bilgi Üniversitesi, 2003), 102.

- 11. Georgeon, Abdulhamid II, 381.
- 12. Edmondson Ramsaur, The Young Turks, 72-73.
- 13. François Georgeon, Aux origines du nationalisme turc, 15, 16–25.
- 14. Suavi Aydın, "İki İttihat-Terakki," 122 (my translation).
- 15. Bernard Lewis, The Emergence of Modern Turkey, 203.
- 16. Doğan Özlem, "Türkiye'de Pozitivizm ve Siyaset," in Uygur Kocabaşoğlu, ed., Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce, vol. 3: Modernleşme ve Batıcılık, 3rd ed. (Istanbul: İletişim, 2004), 459 (my translation).
- 17. Tarık Zafer Tunaya, *Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler, vol. 1: İkinci Meşrutiyet Dönemi* (1908–1918), 3rd ed. (Istanbul: İletişim, 2009), 53. See also Tunaya, *Türkiye'de Siyasal Gelişmeler*, 104–6.
- 18. İdris Küçükömer, Batılaşma & Düzenin Yabancılaşması, 84–88.
- 19. Şerif Mardin, "Center-Periphery Relations," 180-88.
- 20. Sommerville Story, ed., The Memoirs of Ismail Kemal Bey, 306.
- 21. Kuran, İnkılap Tarihimiz ve Jön Türkler, 151–52.
- 22. Yahya Kemal, *Çocukluğum, Gençliğim, Siyasi ve Edebi Hatıralarım*, 190–206 (my translation).
- 23. Prens Sabahaddin, "Yabancı Müdahalesi Üzerine," 46 (my translation).
- 24. Petrosyan, Sovyet Gözüyle Jön Türkler, 217.
- 25. Hilmi Ziya Ülken, *Türkiye'de Çağdaş Düşünce Tarihi*, 133.
- 26. Hacısalihoğlu, Jön Türkler ve Makedonya Sorunu, 99.
- 27. M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, Bir Siyasal Örgüt Olarak Osmanlı İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti ve Jön Türklük, 366.
- 28. Story, The Memoirs of Ismail Kemal Bey, 335.
- Hacısalihoğlu, Jön Türkler ve Makedonya Sorunu, 129–30. See also Hanioğlu, Preparation for a Revolution, 82–90.
- 30. For further information, see Erdem Sönmez, Ahmed Rıza, 86–97.
- 31. For instance, see Ramsaur, The Young Turks, 90-93.
- 32. "Notre programme," *Mechveret (supplément français)* I, December I, 1895, I. In another study I have emphasized that Ahmed Rıza wrote this text. See Sönmez, *Ahmed Rıza*, 98.
- Ahmed Rıza, "İfade-i Mahsusa," Meşveret 24, 25 Rebi'ülâhir 1315 (September 23, 1897), 1; Ahmed Rıza, "İcmal-i Ahval," Meşveret 13, 12 Muharrem 1313 (June 23, 1896), 2.
- 34. Hacısalihoğlu, Jön Türkler ve Makedonya Sorunu, 82.
- 35. Ahmed Rıza, "İcmal-i Ahval," *Meşveret* 15, 12 Safer 1313, (July 23, 1896), 2.
- Ahmed Rıza, "İcmal-i Ahval," Meşveret 19, 12 Rebi'ülâhir 1314 (September 23, 1896), 1-2.
- 37. Suavi Aydın and Ömer Türkoğlu, "İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti Programının ve Eyleminin Radikal Dönüşümü," 264; Petrosyan, *Sovyet Gözüyle Jön Türkler*, 190–91.
- 38. Ahmed Riza, "İcmal-i Ahval," *Meşveret* 2, 28 Cemâziyelâhir 1313 (December 16, 1895), 1–2. Also see Ahmed Riza, "L'Origine des Massacres," *Mechveret (supplément français)* 19, September 15, 1896, 4–5; Ahmed Riza, "Agitation arménienne," *Mechveret (supplément français)* 42, September 1, 1897, 3–4.
- 39. Ahmed Rıza, "İcmal-i Ahval," *Meşveret* 16, 27 Safer 1313 (August 8, 1896), 1–2; Ahmed Rıza, "Girit," *Meşveret* 12, 26 Zilhicce 1313 (June 8, 1896), 1.

- Ahmed Rıza, "İcmal-i Ahval," Meşveret 24, 25 Rebi'ülâhir 1315 (September 23, 1897), 4.
- 41. Kazım Karabekir, İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti, 293.
- 42. Kemal, Çocukluğum, Gençliğim, Siyasi ve Edebi Hatıralarım, 208.
- 43. Erik J. Zürcher, "Kemalist Düşüncenin Osmanlı Kaynakları," 48.
- 44. Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, 39–40; M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, "Turkish Nationalism and the Young Turks, 1889–1908," 90–91. For a similar emphasis, see Uygur Kocabaşoğlu, "Hürriyet'in Basması Kadar Basını da Ünlüdür," 188.
- 45. Hanioğlu, "Turkish Nationalism and the Young Turks," 89.
- 46. M. A., "Osmanlı İttihadı," Meşveret 5, 17 Şaban 1313 (September 1, 1896), 1.
- 47. Hanioğlu, Preparation for a Revolution, 173.
- 48. Ibid., 295-302; Hanioğlu, "Turkish Nationalism and the Young Turks," 94.
- 49. "Meşveret," Meşveret 5, 17 Şaban 1313 (February 2, 1896), 2.
- 50. Kudret Emiroğlu and Çiğdem Ö. Emiroğlu, eds., *Osmanlı Terakki ve İttihad Cemiyeti Umur-ı Dâhiliye Şubesi Memuru Dr. Bahaeddin*, Tahrirat nos. 366 and 372.
- 51. Kemal, Çocukluğum, Gençliğim, Siyasi ve Edebi Hatıralarım, 192.
- 52. Murat Bardakçı, Talat Paşa'nın Evrak-ı Metrûkesi, 256.
- 53. Emiroğlu and Emiroğlu, Osmanlı Terakki ve İttihad Cemiyeti Umur-ı Dâhiliye Şubesi Memuru Dr. Bahaeddin, Tahrirat no. 349.
- 54. See *Meclis-i Ayan Zabıt Ceridesi*, Devre 3, İçtima Senesi 5, vol. 1, 11. İnikad, 21 Teşrin-i Sâni 1334 (1918), 117, 120.
- 55. Rıza, Anılar, 78-79.
- 56. For further information, see Sönmez, Ahmed Riza, 97–102, 114–17.
- 57. Kuran, İnkılap Tarihimiz ve Jön Türkler, 155–56; Story, The Memoirs of Ismail Kemal Bey, 220; Ramsaur, The Young Turks, 76; Akşin, Jön Türkler ve İttihat ve Terakki, 65; Hacısalihoğlu, Jön Türkler ve Makedonya Sorunu, 129; Petrosyan, Sovyet Gözüyle Jön Türkler, 223–24.
- 58. Sabri Ateş, Tunalı Hilmi Bey, 58.
- 59. Ibid., 160-61.
- 60. Ahmed Riza, "Mukaddime," Meşveret 1, 13 Cemâziyelâhir 1313 (December 1, 1895), 1. Also see Ahmed Riza, "L'inaction des Jeunes Turcs," Mechveret (supplément français) 135, December 1, 1902, 1; Ahmed Riza, "Confusion de pouvoirs en Turquie," Mechveret (supplément français) 2, December 15, 1895, 1; Ahmed Riza, "İcmal-i Ahval," Meşveret 6, 2 Ramazan 1313 (February 15, 1896), 1.
- 61. Ahmed Riza, "İhtilal," Meşveret 29, 21 Şaban 1315 (January 15, 1898), 2.
- 62. Şerif Mardin, Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri, 179.
- 63. See Sönmez, *Ahmed Rıza*, 118–23.
- 64. Ahmed Rıza, Vazife ve Mesuliyet: Üçüncü Cüz, 3.
- 65. Ahmed Rıza, Vazife ve Mesuliyet: Birinci Cüz, 7–9 (my translation).
- 66. "Notre programme," Mechveret (supplément français), 1.
- 67. Rıza, "İhtilal," Meşveret, 3.
- 68. "Notre programme," Mechveret (supplément français), 1.
- 69. Ahmed Rıza, "Mısır," Meşveret 9, 18 Şevval 1313 (April 2, 1896), 1.
- Ahmed Rıza, "İcmal-i Ahval," Meşveret 18, 27 Rebi'ülevvel 1314 (September 8, 1896), 18, 2. See also Ahmed Rıza, "İcmal-i Ahval," Meşveret 4, 10 Şaban 1313 (January 26, 1896), 1; Rıza, Vazife ve Mesuliyet: Birinci Cüz, 4.

- 71. Barış Alp Özden, "Ahmet Rıza," 123.
- Ahmed Riza, "Kuvve-i Bahriyemiz," Osmanlı 13, 1 Muharrem 1316 (June 1, 1898),
 See also Ahmed Riza, "A propos du jubilé," Mechveret (supplément français) 104,
 October 1, 1900, 1.
- 73. Ahmed Rıza, *La faillite morale de la politique occidentale en Orient*, 5–6.
- 74. Rıza, Anılar, 23.
- 75. Rıza, *La faillite morale*, 65.
- 76. Ibid., 15.
- 77. Ibid., 19, 27, 29. See also Ömer Turan, "Oryantalizm, Sömürgecilik Eleştirisi ve Ahmed Rıza," 6–45.
- 78. For further information, see Sönmez, *Ahmed Riza*, 107–14.
- 79. Hanioğlu, Preparation for a Revolution, 139.
- 80. Sönmez, Ahmed Rıza, 119.
- Celal Bayar, Ben de Yazdım (Milli Mücadele'ye Giriş), 196–97; Hacısalihoğlu, Jön Türkler ve Makedonya Sorunu, 150.
- 82. Sönmez, Ahmed Riza, 124.
- 83. Meclis-i Mebusan Zabıt Ceridesi, Devre 1, İçtima Senesi 1, vol. 1, 5. İnikad, 13 Kanun-1 Evvel 1324 (1908), 50.
- 84. For example, see *Meclis-i Mebusan Zabıt Ceridesi*, Devre 1, İçtima Senesi 1, vol. 1, 5. İnikad, 13 Kanun-1 Evvel 1324 (1908), 51–52; *Meclis-i Âyan Zabıt Ceridesi*, Devre 3, İçtima Senesi 5, vol. 1, 2. İnikad, 19 Teşrin-i Evvel 1334 (1918), 8–9.
- 85. Rıza, Anılar, 44; Meclis-i Âyan Zabıt Ceridesi, Devre 3, İçtima Senesi 3, vol. 2, 38. İnikad, 5 Mart 1333 (1917), 86; Meclis-i Âyan Zabıt Ceridesi, Devre 3, İçtima Senesi 1, vol. 1, 21. İnikad, 7 Şubat 1330 (1914), 332; Meclis-i Âyan Zabıt Ceridesi, Devre 3, İçtima Senesi 4, vol. 1, 7. İnikad, 26 Teşrin-i Sâni 1333 (1917), 87–88; Meclis-i Âyan Zabıt Ceridesi, Devre 3, İçtima Senesi 3, vol. 2, 48. İnikad, 24 Mart 1333 (1917), 324–26.
- 86. Meclis-i Âyan Zabıt Ceridesi, Devre 3, İçtima Senesi 2, vol. 1, 23. İnikad, 14 Kanun-1 Sâni 1331 (1915), 397.
- 87. Sina Akşin, İstanbul Hükümetleri ve Milli Mücadele-I 17.
- 88. *Meclis-i Âyan Zabıt Ceridesi*, Devre 3, İçtima Senesi 5, vol. 1, 11. İnikad, 21 Teştin-i Sâni 1334 (1918), 117, 12. See also Sabahattin Özel and Işık Çakan Hacıibrahimoğlu, *Osmanlı'dan Milli Mücadele'ye Seçilmiş Mülakatlar*, 202.

Ottomanism and the Ottoman Vatan (1908–1918)

Behlül Özkan

Starting with the 1908 revolution, the traditional political structure that legitimized Ottoman rule through the sultan and the religious heads of the millets was replaced by a constitutional system dominated by a new political elite and modern concepts such as sovereignty, representation, equality, and liberty. Key actors of the Ottoman political elite from different ethnic and religious backgrounds considered Ottomanism the only ideology capable of dealing with the thorny issues of the decade of 1908 to 1918, shaped by the major wars, territorial losses, and mass migrations. As an ideology in transition to adapt to changing circumstances Ottomanism itself became the central expression of this chaotic political environment. Different political and ideological tendencies expressed themselves through it. Therefore rather than considering Ottomanism a clearly defined homogeneous ideology, this chapter analyzes it as a complicated phenomenon with fluid boundaries. Ottomanism operated as an umbrella ideology and attracted not only Turkists and Islamists but also Armenian, Greek, and Arab elites, who saw their communities' future in the continuation of the Ottoman Empire.

Ottomanism had two wings: the Unionists and the incorporationists, mainly key political representatives of the non-Turkish communities, who played an active role in post-1908 Ottoman politics due to the opening of the closed millet system, which had been controlled by traditional religious institutions until then. Although both Unionists and incorporationists were staunch supporters of the integrity of the empire, there was a significant difference between them. Unionists aimed to create an Ottoman nation based on the union of all Ottoman people regardless of their ethnic and religious backgrounds, while incorporationists sought to integrate all Ottoman millets into the Ottoman state, not the Ottoman

nation, through modern institutions such as the Ottoman parliament. On the first anniversary of the 1908 revolution, the CUP (Committee of Union and Progress) in Istanbul issued a declaration to emphasize the importance of the "unity and fusion" of different ethnic and religious groups: "The strength and power of a great nation of thirty million people such as the Ottoman nation rests upon the emergence of unity and fusion among various elements, and what would excite the greatest hope among Ottomans for progress and advancement and make them forget the sufferings of the past is the mutual friendship of the future in particular." Nearly a month before this declaration Kozmidi Efendi, a Greek member of the Ottoman parliament, depicted his vision of Ottomanism, which was noticeably different from the CUP's: "The Ottoman Union we seek to bring about is not a disorganized nation but on the contrary a political union. While each Ottoman element will preserve its own religion and ethnicity, the general interests of the vatan, which is politically integrated, and political union will be realized."2 Nevertheless, both of these wings of Ottomanism found common ground in the ideal of creating an Ottoman patriotism based on a common vatan. Ottomanists were committed to the idea of securing various ethnic and religious groups' loyalty to the Ottoman vatan, which was considered the sole solution to overcome separatist movements.

In order to achieve Ottomanization Unionists believed that two important steps should be taken: (1) abolishing the Capitulations and privileges for non-Muslims in order to restore the full sovereignty of the Ottoman state in which all Ottomans would have the same rights and obligations; and (2) universal conscription and common education for all Ottomans, which would create an Ottoman nation. The CUP's striving for the infusion of patriotic elements in education and the military caused negative reactions from non-Turkish communities. Although Unionists were accused of Turkification of non-Turkish groups, the term "Ottomanization" "does not have the same meaning as 'Germanization' or 'Magyarization' had for the Slavs in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Ottoman was a dynastic designation and as such lacked national overtones." This point was convincingly argued by Nicolae Batzaria, a Vlach member of the CUP from Macedonia who served as a senator and cabinet minister, in his book about the Young Turks written in the early 1920s:

We were born in that mosaic of races and religions in the Turkish empire, which extended over three old continents, were officially not "Turkish subjects" but "Ottoman subjects." No document or

official act mentioned the name of "Turk," but exclusively that of "Ottoman" or "Osmanlı." The Ottomans or the Osmanlıs included all subjects of the Empire founded by Osman. The Turks were a part of the Ottomans. To be an Ottoman did not mean in the least to be a Turk. Thus, the fact that non-Turkish Ottomans entered public service, the Parliament, or the Cabinet did not imply that they were turcisized.⁴

Unionists were realistic enough to realize that the policy of Turkification would destroy the empire stretching from Kosovo/Kosova to Yemen. But they were not able to implement their program of Ottomanization, because they had neither enough time nor a suitable political environment, which was shaped by nationalist uprisings, interference of European powers, and territorial losses in major wars. Moreover, the semicolonial relationship between the European powers and the Ottoman Empire was a substantial setback for the Unionists' plan to establish a strong central government to carry the necessary economic reforms.

According to Bernard Lewis, "The Armenians and other Christian nationalities found little to attract them in an Ottoman federation, and preferred to seek the fulfillment of their political aspirations outside the Empire altogether." 5 Contrary to Lewis's argument, Ottomanism was appealing for the significant part of the non-Muslim elites who supported incorporation of Ottoman millets. After the 1908 revolution they negotiated and cooperated with the Unionists in the Ottoman parliament to defend their communities' interests and by doing so challenged the traditional closed millet system and jeopardized the autonomy of religious leaders. As Vangelis Kechriotis underlined, they "shared a vision about the integrity of an Ottoman Empire, which, through its political and economic emancipation, could provide a viable alternative to all kinds of nationalism." Nationalists in their communities, however, accused them of betraying the national ideals, which, incorporationists argued, were dangerous for all Ottoman millets. The main dilemma for non-Muslim Ottomanists was that on the one hand they promoted liberalization of the Ottoman state but on the other hand they supported equality of the millets, not the equality of all Ottoman people. In other words, they were in favor of modernization as long as the traditional millet system and its privileges were maintained. Non-Muslim Ottomanists maintained their status in the Ottoman system provided that they defended communal interests, so they remained the representatives of their millets not of the Ottoman people or the Ottoman nation.

THE 1908 REVOLUTION AND OTTOMANISM

Between the 1908 revolution and the Balkan Wars of 1912–13 the Unionists optimistically believed that maintaining the imperial political structure was in the interests of all Ottomans and therefore should be endorsed by them. The nationalist ideas of the Turkists were not favored by the majority of the CUP members, who refused to liquidate the empire to create a nation-state. As "empire savers," they protested that such a move would lead to a loss of territory in Rumelia and Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem in the Middle East, all of which were considered indispensable parts of the Ottoman vatan. Unionist leaders embraced the imperial discourse in opposition to a nationalist discourse. The CUP reasoned that Ottomanism and loyalty to the Ottoman vatan would be the glue to unify all Ottoman people.

According to the Unionists, all ethnic groups had their "special vatans" (vatan-1 hususi), which were enclosed by the "general vatan" (vatan-1 umuni). Interior minister Halil Bey (Menteşe), rejected "the Turkification of Ottomans" and regarded such a policy as "destructive" for the empire: "The aim of the government in internal politics is the union of all Ottomans. The objective of the policy of union is to convince all Ottomans that they will consider every part of the Ottoman vatan as their common vatan and with the same common love and affection they will see the Ottoman state as their own state." A clear illustration of how the CUP embraced the policy of the "Unity of Elements" or Ottomanism was Sultan Mehmed Reşad's historic tour of Ottoman cities in the Balkans in 1911. The CUP meticulously organized parades in which Bulgarians, Greeks, and Albanians demonstrated their loyalty to the sultan. 11

Both CUP politicians and intellectuals such as Ziya Gökalp, who would be a leading Turkist after the Balkan Wars, took a clear Ottomanist stance until 1913. In 1909 Gökalp defined the Ottoman Empire as "the free and progressivist America of the East." He used the term "Young Ottomans" instead of "Young Turks" to define the patriotic intellectuals: "Who are the Young Ottomans? Regardless of their [ethnic] identity, they are open-minded people, who adapted to the new life and the new civilization, seeking to save patriotism from the hegemony of one [ethnic] group and disseminate it to all citizens." Gökalp highlighted the fact that the Young Ottomans did not restrict themselves to the proclamation of the constitutional regime. Their two other crucial objectives were to realize "Ottoman Unity" and to establish "an advanced civilization" for

the Ottoman society. According to Gökalp, members of the Young Ottomans referred to themselves first as Ottomans and then as Arabs, Turks, Armenians, or Greeks, depending on their ethnicity. In 1909 Gökalp truly believed in the viability of the Ottoman nation, "which would exist forever in constitutionalism and friendship, and would always advance under the guidance of the Young Ottomans." ¹²

Two years later, in the article "The Resistance of the Old," Gökalp made a clear distinction between ethnicity (*kavim*) and nation (*millet*). Whereas Armenians, Turks, Greeks, and Kurds were different ethnicities, together they constituted the Ottoman nation, which had a political character: "An Englishman, a Frenchman, and a German belong to different political communities. All of them have a specific vatan. Like them, we belong to the Ottoman nation and the Ottoman vatan." ¹³

Similarly, Fuat Köprülü, who would support Turkism after the Balkan Wars, had a disagreement with the authors of Genç Kalemler (Young Pens), particularly with Ali Canip, over the construction of a national language for Turks in the Ottoman Empire. Genç Kalemler argued that Ottoman Turkish was too complicated for the common Turkish people. For that reason, the language needed to be reformed, replacing Arabic and Persian words with native Turkish words. Canip contended that, while young writers in Istanbul such as Köprülü represented cosmopolite "internationalism," the young people in Anatolia defended "patriotism." Köprülü would soon understand that his "cosmopolitism shall bring this poor vatan into a terrible abyss." 14 Against the demands of Turkification of the language, Fuat Köprülü, who was writing in the journal Servet-i Fünun (Wealth of Sciences), defended Ottoman Turkish. He refused to accept the "new language movement" because he believed that this new language was stillborn, like Esperanto. Köprülü blamed the authors of Genç Kalemler for "taking us [the Ottoman Turks] back to Karakorum," in Central Asia, which would "cause us to live like Oğuz Khan," who was the mythical founder of Hun Turks.¹⁵

Whereas part of the Arab, Armenian, and Greek elites regarded Ottomanism as a tactical move in order to realize political aims, some others sincerely believed in the idea of the incorporation of different ethnic and religious groups based on loyalty to the Ottoman vatan. They were aware that the victory of ethnic nationalist movements over Ottomanism would have catastrophic results for all Ottoman nations. Hovhannes Boujikanian, a philosophy teacher in Harput, criticized Armenian separatist nationalism and warned Armenians about the dangers of ethnic nationalism:

Let's, at least hereafter, grasp that our destiny is tied with the Ottoman constitution. Any separatist ideal or intention would be a horrible destruction for us, and undoubtedly cold-blooded profit-seeking Europe would not weep for us. Setting fires or spilling blood in various places of the wounded fatherland to take the attention of Europe and begging pie from her is absolute foolishness. Our hot-blooded young ones and maverick parties should learn this well.¹⁶

Krikor Zohrab, an Armenian member of the Ottoman parliament, argued that Armenians should support the CUP: "Remember that the CUP is the party in power. Even if our persuasions and feelings would not lead us in their direction, the special interests of our nation order us to be compromised." ¹⁷

Some non-Turkish Ottomanists refused ethnic separatism and saw their future in the Ottoman Empire rather than in independent nation-states. Sati Bey, a truly Ottomanist Arab intellectual, criticized the supporters of Turkish, Arab, and Armenian nationalisms and their negation of Ottoman patriotism as a feasible ideology. He refused to imitate the European countries by constructing an Ottoman vatan based on language or ethnicity, as various ethnic groups and a great number of languages were dispersed in the vast territories of the empire. To overcome these differences, Sati Bey claimed that loyalty to the Ottoman vatan "has to be established on the basis of the Ottoman state and common history." Islam was the most important link among Ottomans; and it was "only the Ottoman Empire that would be able to protect its sovereignty." ¹⁸

Loyalty to the Ottoman Empire was also praised by Garabed Soghigian, an Armenian teacher in Harput. He highlighted that Armenians were ready to fight and sacrifice their lives for the Ottoman vatan:

Some thought we are traitors, enemies of state and nation. Now we hope that they see those traitors are the most fervent ones in guarding the fatherland if they are sure that they are regarded as the genuine children of the country. If his family or fatherland demands the Armenian makes every sacrifice. Until now he was told that he has no fatherland.... The (Ottoman races) will live in the same land side by side, just like American [sic] where various races live together, around [the] same principles with [the] same patriotic feelings, and tied with [the] same motive for profit.¹⁹

Khachadur Nahigian, another teacher at the American college in Harput, emphasized: "I wish we all Ottomans would grasp the value of this piece of land and remain attached to it [in] our hearts and minds. I am sure that the future will make us the happiest nation of Asia."²⁰

Two of the best examples of Ottomanism were the introduction of universal conscription and common education for all Ottomans. Universal conscription was announced in the political program of the CUP: "without making ethnic and religious distinction everyone will be conferred with complete equality, liberty, and the same obligations.... Therefore non-Muslims will also be subject to the conscription law." This policy meant changing the mission of the Ottoman army from fighting on behalf of Islam to patriotic defense of the vatan. By introducing conscription the CUP aimed to strengthen the feeling of kinship among all Ottomans. Ali Seydi Bey emphasized this issue in the Unionist newspaper *Tanin*:

Exempting some people from the defense of the vatan who are otherwise subject to the same laws in all other matters with their fellow citizens amounts to confirming that their bond with the vatan is infirm and shaky...enmity and hatred among different elements of the empire are to be eliminated only if Ahmet and Huseyin eat from the same caldron and sleep in the same dormitory with Artin and Dimitri.²²

Süryani, Armenian, and Greek elites supported the introduction of conscription and considered the exemption of Christians from the military service to be a humiliation. Hanna Sırrı Çıkkı, a Süryani teacher from Mardin, praised the participation of non-Muslims in the Ottoman army:

I am sure that every Ottoman individual from a non-Muslim millet is ever prepared to be part of this glorious military and shield with his own body each stone of our sacred vatan.... Since love for the vatan is, in every religion, in every culture, in every part of the world, counted amongst the most exalted virtues of the highest order and of the highest sanctity, we ought to hold this love to be the most venerable of natural feelings and the most sacred of all necessary functions.²³

An Armenian cleric, Bsak Vartabed, underlined the importance of the military service in the Ottoman army for Armenians: Now, hereafter, we (Armenians) have an additional, new patriotic duty. We will give our sons to serve the Ottoman fatherland; in other words, we will gift our sons to the nation. They will not belong to us anymore. Like Turkish mothers and fathers realize their obligation we will do ours.... Patriotism requires victims and sacrifice, the time will come that we will fight in the field as one heart and soul instead of being only spectators.²⁴

Similarly, the Greek metropolitan of Ankara emphasized the meaning of the military for Greeks: "Since we all are sons of this vatan, this sacred vatan is common for all of us. Hence, for the defense of the vatan all Ottomans should be ready to sacrifice their lives, that is an unquestionable duty." ²⁵

During the parliamentary discussions some Muslim deputies alleged that Christians were wholeheartedly supporting conscription not because of Ottoman patriotism but because the exemption tax or military payment-in-lieu (*bedel-i askeri*) was a huge financial burden for them. Armenian member of parliament Krikor Zohrab despised these allegations:

We desire to sacrifice our blood for our vatan. While we are touched by such sentiments, you would not truly understand our state of mind should you say we are trying to obtain exemption from military service tax.... We are striving to avoid things such as kavmiyet [ethnic nationalism] and milliyet [nationalism]. We would like to live together. In order to learn how to live together, we must also die together.²⁶

One year later Greek deputy Boşo Efendi argued in parliament that Greeks would demonstrate their loyalty to the Ottoman state by serving in the Ottoman army:

I hereby speak for all Ottomans, but particularly on behalf of the Greek millet: In my view, if we were obliged to join the army for military service, it would again be the Greek millet to suffer the most. Yet, so as to prove that Greeks are all Ottomans, I say that they all should perform military service, which would make them suffer, but they should be soldiers anyway. This is how someone claims his rights to Ottomanness. Either we are Ottomans or we are not.²⁷

Another delicate issue was the CUP's education reform that would increase the Ottoman state's inspection and authority over non-Muslim schools. Unionists argued that by controlling the curricula of community schools the Ottoman state would establish "order and union" among Ottoman people. According to the new education law, while primary school education would continue in community languages, Ottoman Turkish would be compulsory in secondary and higher schools. Hüseyin Cahit believed that in the new era the Unionists did not allow hostile ideas against "Ottomanism" to be disseminated in the community schools: "How could an Ottoman person, who does not know our language, join us? How could we understand each other's intention?" For these reasons, instruction of Turkish should be compulsory in education.²⁸ When the issue was debated in the parliament, non-Muslim members claimed that reforms should not "harm the methods of communal education ab antiquo." During the debate Boşo Efendi portrayed his understanding of Ottomanism, which was strikingly different from the Unionists': "The Ottoman state is shaped like a corporation. In order to exalt this corporation, all partners should enter into it with all their assets. What are our assets? Our religion and our education, nothing else." This demand was furiously opposed by Unionists and especially by Hüseyin Cahit, who accused non-Muslim deputies of playing two-sided tactics:

We live in a state in which we are all equal; equality of people from of all elements was announced, and there cannot be any privilege among elements other than religion. My mind could not comprehend this; we are all shouting long live liberty and equality, but some among us say we have privileges and these privileges are more than religion and holy books. Privileges about education and instruction are against the constitution and justice.... In a reign of equality I have to say to our citizens [who seek to defend privileges in education] that you are just talking about liberty and equality, but they don't exist in your hearts.³⁰

THE BALKAN WARS: THE END OF OTTOMANISM?

The Balkan territories of the empire had a significant position in the eyes of the Ottoman ruling elite. The grand vezir Said Paşa (1830–1914) argued in his report submitted to Sultan Abdülhamid that "the survival of this state depends on the continuation of our rule in the Rumelia

region."³¹ Balkan countries such as Greece, Serbia, Montenegro, and Bulgaria formed an alliance against the Ottoman Empire and declared war in October 1912. Within a few months the Ottoman army had lost battles on all fronts and retreated to its last defense line in Çatalca, sixty kilometers from Istanbul. The human suffering of the Muslims massacred or forced out of their homes was reported by Leon Trotsky, who was sent to cover the Balkan Wars as a correspondent by the Russian newspaper *Kievskaia Mysl*':

[W]ith the coming of night the komitadjis began their work. They broke into Turkish and Albanian houses and performed there the same task in every case: plundering and killing. Skoplje had 60,000 inhabitants, of whom half were Albanians and Turks. Some of them, to be sure, had fled, but the overwhelming majority remained. And now, by night, reprisals were being carried out against them.³²

The Balkan Wars were the turning point for the Ottoman Empire and Ottomanism. The loss of all territories in the Balkans (including the historic capital city of Edirne) and the systematic ethnic cleansing of Muslims created a feeling of despair within Muslim society. The collapse of the imperial discourse was reflected remarkably in an account by Şevket Süreyya Aydemir:

Eventually when the Balkan War broke out and the imperial armies lost all the Ottoman territories in Europe to the Balkan armies, which had been so despised before, everything became clear. This collapse was not simply a defeat of a state. It was the end of a groundless dream. It was a complete downfall of a spirit and mentality. A tale, an imperial tale was coming to an end. Apparently, what we considered as grandeur was just a sleep of negligence.³³

Indeed intellectuals and politicians described the situation in the empire after the First Balkan War as a "national disaster" (*milli felaket*). Newspapers and journals published articles, and conferences were organized to make Turkish society conscious of the seriousness of the military defeat to an unprecedented degree. Fuat Köprülü criticized the prevalent feeling of desperation among Turks after the loss of Edirne. According to him, Turkish youth should leave submissive thoughts aside and get ready

for revenge: "If today's youth gradually instill the common people with the principles of nationality and revenge, there will be no need to fear the arrival of the Slav army at the gates of Çatalca." The Speaker of the parliament, Halil Bey, warned members not to forget the loss of Rumelia:

Other nations do not forget the parts of their vatan that they lost in wars, keeping them alive for future generations. In doing so, they protect the future from the disastrous consequences of the same causes. From this exalted pulpit, I recommend to my nation: Do not forget! Do not forget the beloved Salonika, the cradle of the torch of freedom and constitutionalism, green Monastir, Kosova, Shkodër, Ioannina, and all of the beautiful Rumelia. With their lessons, articles, poems, and all their spiritual influence, I hereby request our teachers, authors, poets, and intellectuals to keep alive for the future generations the fact that there are brothers and parts of the vatan to be saved across the border.³⁵

After the Greek army conquered Selanik, the leading authors of the journal Genç Kalemler, such as Ziya Gökalp and Ömer Seyfettin (1884-1920), came to Istanbul and joined other Turkists in the Türk Yurdu.³⁶ Ziya Gökalp, who truly believed in the viability of Ottomanism before 1912, made a dramatic change in his thought and declared the demise of the Ottoman unity. His article "Turkification, Islamization, Modernization," published by Türk Yurdu on March 20, 1913, bore a resemblance to Akçura's work *Three Types of Policy*, with one major difference. Nine years before Akçura had analyzed and compared three different ideologies (Turkism, Islamism, and Ottomanism), but Gökalp refused to examine Ottomanism as a feasible ideology. For Gökalp, Turkishness should be the dominant ideology against the "cosmopolitan" ideologies of Islamism and Ottomanism. He claimed that "Tanzimat [reformers] had faith in creating a voluntary nation out of an existing nation consisting of different ethnic and religious elements. With this conviction in mind, they attributed a new meaning to the historical 'Ottoman' concept that was entirely free of national colors. The painful past experiences proved that the new meaning of the term [Ottoman] was embraced only by pro-Tanzimat Turks." Because the twentieth century was "the century of nationality," the goal for Turks at this time should have been to construct a "modern and Islamic Turkishness." 37

After the Balkan Wars, as had happened with Ziya Gökalp, Köprülü's thought shifted in favor of Turkism. In his article "Turkism, Islamism,

Ottomanism" in Türk Yurdu, Köprülü argued that "the development of Ottomanism and Islamism is only possible by awakening and advancing Turkism." He had previously objected to the formation of a national Turkish language a few years before, but after the Balkan Wars Köprülü considered the "national ideal" the only option for the survival of the Ottoman Turks: "The two important elements, which constitute nationality, are national history and national language. However, language and tradition lost their meaning [among Turks] and have become the basis for decadence. National history has been forgotten to such a degree that the nation's name 'Turk' has disappeared and the word 'Ottoman,' which is a diplomatic concept, is used instead." According to Köprülü, "the Ottoman state lost most parts of the vatan, because of the weakness of the Turkish core." The military officials also deemed the lack of a national ideal to be the major reason for the catastrophic defeat of the Ottoman army. Fevzi Paşa (Çakmak, 1876–1950), who fought in Kosova during the Balkan Wars and later became the field marshal in the Turkish army, analyzed the Balkan Wars in a conference in 1927: "Turkism as an ideal was nonexistent during the Balkan Wars.... All other nations, which together constituted the Ottoman union, had different and conflicting religions, vatans, and ideals."39

As these examples reveal, nationalism became one of the main ideologies among Turkish intellectuals just after the Balkan Wars. But it must be stressed that the increasing emphasis on nationalism did not mean an overnight shift from Ottomanism to Turkish nationalism. The writings of these intellectuals were all a hasty response to the catastrophic defeat in the Balkan Wars, and the impact of Turkish nationalism on the military, bureaucracy, and society remained limited until the end of World War I. Furthermore, they experienced disagreement and confusion about whether to limit nationalism to the Turks living in the Ottoman Empire or to support Turkist ideals for the unity of all Turkic groups in Eurasia. Whereas Yusuf Akçura and Ahmet Ağaoğlu had a clear pan-Turkist stance, Fuat Köprülü opted for developing the national consciousness among Ottoman Turks. Others such as Ziya Gökalp were undecided about whether to support pan-Turkism or Turkish nationalism. On the one hand, Gökalp was delighted with the idea of Turan and wrote poems about it. On the other hand, his articles admitted the impossibility of the unity of all Turks under one state. He popularized among the common people the "ideal of Turan," which played a compensatory role for Turkists in the declining years of the Ottoman Empire. 40 Gökalp defined the homeland for all Turks in his poem "Turan," published by the journal

Genç Kalemler in 1911: "The vatan of the Turks is neither Turkey nor Turkestan. Their vatan is a vast and eternal land: Turan." ⁴¹

Gökalp used the concept of Turan as an imaginary ideal for Turks rather than as an immediate political objective for the empire. He later admitted that the unity of all Turkic people in the Eurasian continent would be possible only in the distant future. Due to the significant territorial losses in the empire's heartland of Rumelia, along with the failure of a multireligious army to fight against the Balkan Christian states, the intellectuals started to question Ottomanism and its ideals. A small circle considered the ideal of Turan to be the panacea to alleviate the territorial losses in the last four decades and to expand the empire toward the east. The psychological condition of Turkish intellectuals was best reflected by Aydemir when he defined his own state of mind after the Balkan Wars. According to him, Anatolia was too small to satisfy the ideals of the young people from Rumelia, who dreamed of ruling the territories "from Danube to the Caucasus and from Africa to the gates of India." Turkism presented a vast region for them to identify as their homeland: "But in the midst of all these turbulences, a new way of thinking was crystallizing in our minds. This was an understanding of a new vatan and a new nation. Accordingly the vatan was no longer equal to the territories belonging to the state. That is, the vatan was not simply the territories under the control of the army." ⁴² For Aydemir,

vatan meant anywhere inhabited by the [Turkish] nation. Regardless of the sovereign and the flag, the name of this vatan was Turan.... What is disappearing is only the Ottoman vatan. However, the vatan of the Turks covers the entire world. Because every place inhabited by Turks is part of the Turkish vatan, no matter which flag it is under. The borders of this vatan stretch from the Danube and Maritsa up to the Altai Mountains, to the Great Wall of China and even to the Yellow Sea. It extends from the deserts of Arabia and Himalayas to the North Sea. ⁴³

Various authors sought to define the borders of this new vatan, which was sometimes referred to as "Turkish homeland" and sometimes as "Turan." In the first issue of *Türk Yurdu* Ahmet Ağaoğlu admitted that "there is nothing more difficult than drawing the real boundaries of the Turkish world, which is as large and at the same time as vague as imagination." For him, the "Turkish world" could not include such regions as Hungary, Finland, North Africa, or remote regions in China, which

had only historical links with the Turks. It should instead be composed of the regions that had been dominated by the Turks and Turkish civilization. Nevertheless, his vision of the Turkish world was expansive, reaching from Mongolia to the Balkan Mountains and from Syria to the Caspian Sea.

Halide Edip's utopian novel Yeni Turan (The New Turan), published in 1912, became a leading literary work following Gökalp's poem "Turan" and had a great impact on Turkish society. Many cafes and restaurants named themselves Yeni Turan after the popular novel.⁴⁵ It is based on a struggle between two political parties. The New Turan advocates for Turkish nationalism against an Ottomanist party, which suppresses Turkish nationalism for the sake of Ottoman unity. Although the title of the novel has a pan-Turkist connotation, Halide Edip imagined New Turan as an advanced Turkish country in Anatolia with modern institutions, such as railways and high schools. The main characters of the novel search for the imagined country and repeatedly ask the same question throughout the novel: "O! New Turan, dear country, tell me how can I reach you?" For Halide Edip, the most important step in order to realize the imagined New Turan was to develop strong territorial nationalism among Turkish people.46 This hasty nationalist response to the catastrophic defeat in the Balkan Wars, however, hardly reached the ordinary Muslim population and remained an intellectual debate in and around Istanbul. Moreover, the decisions of the state officials were more shaped by local conditions and Ottoman identity than by nationalism.

WORLD WAR I: IMAGINING AN ISLAMIC VATAN

Nationalism in the late Ottoman period evolved as a de facto ideology in response to wars, territorial losses, and large-scale migrations. Between the 1908 revolution and the establishment of the Republic of Turkey in 1923, the Turkish ruling elite oscillated among Ottoman patriotism, Turkism, and Islamism in order to develop the most appropriate ideology to prevent the disintegration of the empire and to "save the vatan."

With the beginning of World War I Ottoman leaders started to advocate Islamism, along with Ottomanism, as a way of obtaining the support of non-Turkish Muslims. Sultan Mehmed Reşad's speech in 1914 at the inauguration of the parliament warned all Muslims against the hostile policies of Russia, France, and Britain: "I invited all Muslims to the Jihad against these states and their allies." ⁴⁷ In rallies in Istanbul at the

beginning of the war Enver Paşa was referred to as "Enver, who carries the Islamic flag in his hand with courage."48 In February 1916, a few months before the Hashemite Revolt, which would incorrectly become known as the Arab Revolt in British propaganda, Enver Paşa toured the Middle Eastern front from Damascus to the Sinai Peninsula, Mecca, and Medina. His visit to Medina and the tomb of the Prophet Muhammad was identified as an "agent's account to the master about his duty, which was entrusted by the former from the latter." The appointment of Said Halim Paşa (1865–1921) to the grand vezirate in 1913 demonstrated that the CUP took the ideology of Islamism seriously into consideration to ensure the loyalty of Arabs to the center.⁵⁰ Said Halim Paşa, who was the grandson of Mehmed Ali Paşa of Egypt and had connections with Arab intellectuals, served from 1913 to 1917. He became the longest-serving grand vezir in the last decade of the empire.⁵¹ He believed that the Ottoman Empire was in "the age of stagnation" (Devr-i Tevakkuf), and during the world war its main consideration had to be to "protect the borders." He rejected the expansionist aspirations of Enver Pasa: "I beg you to abandon the conquest of Turan and Egypt and aspirations for Tripoli, Tunisia, Algeria, etc."52

Whereas Islamism and "Grand Jihad" were employed against the British Empire to obtain the support of non-Turkish Muslims, the aim of Turkism was to unite the Turks in the Caucasus and central Asia, inciting them to revolt against the Russian Empire. When the war on the Caucasus front started at the end of 1914, the CUP officials constructed road signs in Anatolian cities pointing toward the east and reading "the road toward Turan."53 The CUP's two-directional policy was best reflected in Gökalp's poem "Kızıl Destan" (Red Epic), which was published in the newspaper Tanin just four days after the signing of the Ottoman-German alliance. Gökalp identified the conquest of Turan as the main military objective for the Ottoman Empire: "The land of the enemy shall be devastated, Turkey shall be enlarged and become Turan...The Altai homeland shall be the great vatan, and the sultan shall be the ruler of Turan."54 Although scholars such as Bernard Lewis and Jacob Landau have extensively cited "Red Epic" to portray the Turkist stance of the CUP, they have not noticed the unambiguous Islamist perspective of Gökalp.⁵⁵ In "Red Epic" Gökalp identifies the British Empire as the common enemy of all Muslims and calls on them to unite: "Englishmen captured the Sultan Osman [a warship]; by using it they will control India and Amman! Islam identified its enemy, soon there shall be a happy moment: the Qur³an shall take revenge on the enemy."⁵⁶

During World War I Ziya Gökalp modified his Turkist stance and put more emphasis on Islam and on the solidarity between Turks and Arabs: "the Ottoman state can be named a Turk-Arab state." For Gökalp, the empire contained three different vatans: the Turkish vatan, which was referred to as Turan; the Arabic vatan; and the Islamic vatan, which encompassed all of the Muslims in the world. Gökalp emphasized that Turks' devotion to Turan did not imply that they disregarded "the lesser Islamic vatan" (the Ottoman country) and "the greater Islamic vatan." In the same way Ömer Seyfettin identified three types of vatan for the Turks: (1) the national vatan, which was Turan; (2) the religious vatan, which was all the territories inhabited by Muslims; and (3) the physical vatan, which he referred to as "Turkey" and which included all of the Ottoman territories. According to him, Turks and Arabs shared the religious vatan, and it was their duty to liberate its occupied parts. ⁵⁸

In 1914 the CUP considered the support of the Arabs to be critical in the Middle Eastern front against the British Empire. Said Halim Paşa truly believed in the internationalism of Islam and rejected the import of nationalism from the West and its adaptation in Muslim societies. According to him, a unified Islamic worldview should prevail in every Muslim country: "Islamic realities did not belong to a specific vatan." Islamic traditions and ideals, which together constituted the "spiritual vatan," were much more important than the physical vatan. For Said Halim Paşa, "the vatan of a Muslim is the place where Islamic law reigns." The well-known Islamist intellectual Mehmet Akif (1873–1936), who was a member of the CUP and the author of the Turkish national anthem, also harshly criticized Turkists. He claimed that ethnic nationalism did great harm to the cohesive structure of Islam and divided Islamic society into various competing groups. In his poems he accused Turkists such as Ziya Gökalp of running after impractical ideas and therefore damaging the integrity of the traditional Islamic structure of the Ottoman Empire: "We acquired a myth named the 'County of Turan'; we considered this myth to be the cause and strove for it. But we lost many homelands to realize this cause; the lost ones are enough, feel sorry for the remaining homeland!"60 In the same way Islamist writer Ahmed Naim (1872–1934) accused Turkists of turning from the Kaaba to Turan and criticized their partitioning of the Ottoman Empire into three different vatans: "I beg you for Islam, for mankind, and for Turkism, about whose future I am afraid: Do not create two ideals for the people. There are some among you who want to have three different vatans. According to a Turkish saying, the fork cannot be put into a hole for a pole. How can you insert this

fork-type ideal, namely, three different vatans, into people? Do not deviate from the Islamic ideal."⁶¹

Ottomanism, Turkism, and Islamism were employed by the CUP as ideological tools to "save the empire" from disintegration. The main goal of the CUP was to establish a "general vatan" for the unity of various groups living in a diverse geography rather than in a national territory. Whereas the imagined vatan (Turan) reached as far as the Chinese border, the spiritual Islamic vatan embraced all Muslims in the Middle East and North Africa. The CUP's vision was clearly imperial, and its recipe to prevent the collapse of the empire was to expand the borders. For Unionists, the only way for the Ottoman Empire to escape its declining position in international politics was to return to Great Power status. On September 11, 1914, one month after the signing of the Ottoman-German alliance, the Ottoman government unilaterally abrogated the Capitulations that had transformed the empire into a colonial power in the nineteenth century. After the empire officially entered the war in November 1914, its first military objective was to wage an offensive on the Caucasus front against Russia. In the winter of 1915 the empire initiated another offensive against Britain to capture the Suez region. As noted, politicians and intellectuals such as Said Halim Paşa and Yahya Kemal (1884–1958) openly criticized the offensive war objectives of the CUP and instead advocated for a defensive stance in the war. But these dissident voices were disregarded and silenced by the authoritarian CUP rule during the war.

Contrary to expectations about the rapid breakdown of the Ottoman Empire on the various military fronts, its military performance in the Battle of the Dardanelles and in Iraq against the British army was outstanding. These promising expectations, however, turned ominous in 1916. The empire lost almost all of eastern Anatolia to the Russian Empire. On the Middle Eastern front two military campaigns to capture the Suez region ended without any success. Moreover, the call for a jihad of all Muslims against the British Empire was futile and did not have a major effect on the Arab people. Due to the Hashemite Revolt and the retreat of the Ottoman army on the Middle Eastern front, Islamism lost its appeal for the Unionists. The CUP displayed a Turkist and secular outlook in its congress of 1916. In 1917 the war was called the "Independence War" in the Ottoman parliament. 62 The gloomy outlook changed once again after the Russian Revolution and the signing of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty in March 1918. Before the end of World War I (although the Ottoman army had retreated to Mosul and Aleppo, thereby losing almost all of its possessions in the Middle East), the Ottomans had captured Tabriz

and Baku on the Caucasian front. With the signing of the Armistice of Mudros in October 1918, the empire abandoned its territorial gains in the Caucasus. All of the Ottoman garrisons outside of Anatolia were surrendered to the Allies.

CONCLUSION

When the 1908 revolution occurred, the empire stretched from Libya to Yemen and from Basra to Kosova. According to the population census in 1906–7, the Ottoman Empire had 15,508,753 Muslims (mainly Turks and Arabs), 2,823,063 Greeks, 1,031,668 Armenians, 761,530 Bulgarians, and 253,425 Jews. In this chaotic, multiethnic, and multireligious environment it would have been political suicide for the Unionists and non-Turkish Ottomanists to apply nationalist policies. According to François Georgeon, "during the 1908 Revolution, the nationalist movement was nonexistent. There were no newspapers or organizations that supported [nationalist] ideas." Similarly, Hasan Kayalı argues that "the CUP subscribed to the supranational ideal of Ottomanism. There is no convincing evidence that it formulated or pursued a Turkish nationalist cultural or political program."

Why did a significant part of the non-Turkish elites remain loyal to Ottomanism at least until 1914? Were they wholeheartedly supporting the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire or just paying lip service to Ottomanism and waiting for suitable conditions to join the nationalist separatists? Were they idealist Ottoman patriots or pragmatic politicians? Although answers for these questions might be different for each individual, one thing is certain: non-Muslim Ottomanists were more farsighted than nationalists, who aimed to create homogeneous nation states in the multiethnic territories of the empire. According to these Ottomanists, the nationalist projects would have catastrophic results for all Ottoman nations. This distant stance toward nationalism was noticed by Krikor Zohrab's friend Edwin Pears, a British barrister who lived for about forty years in Istanbul:

My friend Mr. Zohrab, an Armenian deputy of ability with whom I discussed the question very fully at the time, felt that in the interest of his race it was better not to give prominence to the massacre. Whether they liked it or not, Armenians had to live among the Turks, and unless they could continue on good terms with the Committee, the only alternative to a series of new massacres was

to make an appeal to be united to Russia. But as Russia up to that time had been curiously narrow in its treatment of the Armenian Church and community, and seemed to wish to have nothing to do with its people, there were very few amongst them who were in favour of such an appeal. The choice, said others, is between massacre and Russia. Hence the general sentiment amongst them was that they must make common cause with the Turks as represented by the Young Turkey Party, and this they continued to do until the outbreak of the war in 1914. 66

Ten years after the 1908 revolution a radically different tableau stood before the ruling elites of the empire. In the war against Italy in 1911-12 the empire lost its last territory in Africa (Libya). In the Balkan Wars the European heartland of the empire was invaded by the Balkan states. Except for the Edirne region, all of the European territories were surrendered. The dramatic loss of significant territories resulted in the dislocation of the imperial discourse. The loss of territories in the Balkans and Libya caused Turkish and Arab intellectuals to question the validity of Ottomanism. Arab intellectuals also questioned the ability of the Ottoman state—due to its poor performance against Italy in Libya—to defend territories inhabited by Arabs in the Middle East against European powers. Similarly, Turkish nationalists argued that the Ottoman state and the army were too weak for imperial ambitions. ⁶⁷ During World War I, when the Ottoman sultan's declaration of jihad to unite all Muslims against the empire's enemies was disregarded by most non-Turkish Muslims, Turkist voices started to be heard more loudly, arguing that uniting all Turks would serve the empire's interests better than Islamism. In 1918 the empire controlled only territories where Turks and Kurds were the majority.

NOTES

- "Osmanlı İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti'nin İstanbul Heyet-i Merkeziyesi Beyannamesidir," *Tanin*, June 23, 1909; quoted in Hasan Taner Kerimoğlu, İttihat Terakki ve Rumlar, 179–80.
- 2. Mebusan Zabıt Ceridesi, Devre 1, İçtima Senesi 1, vol. 4, 206.
- Feroz Ahmad, "Unionist Relations with the Greek, Armenian, and the Jewish Communities of the Ottoman Empire."
- 4. Enver Paşa explained in his diary that he purposely recruited Batzaria into the Society of Union and Progress: "I was instrumental in bringing into Society the first Christian members. For instance Basarya [Batzaria] effendi." Nicolae Batzaria, Din Lumea Islamului, Turcia Junilor Turci (Bucharest: Editura Ancora, Alcalay

- & Calafateanu, n.d.), 284, quoted in Kemal H. Karpat, "The Memoirs of N. Batzaria," 290.
- 5. Bernard Lewis, The Emergence of Modern Turkey, 204.
- 6. Vangelis Kechriotis, "On the Margins of National Historiography," 135.
- 7. Cemal Paşa wrote his memoirs in 1919 and admitted that the Unionists were unsuccessful in integrating the revolutionary organizations of other ethnic groups into the CUP: "Just as the Ottoman government was formed by the union of all Ottoman nations, we wanted the CUP to be a union of all revolutionary organizations of all the Ottoman nations." Cemal Paşa, Hatıralar, 346.
- 8. M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, Preparation for a Revolution, 313-17.
- 9. Tarık Zafer Tunaya, *Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler*, 373–75. The idea of establishing two types of territorial loyalty was first employed in the Ottoman Empire in 1878 by Albanian intellectual Şemseddin Sami, who argued that he had two different loyalties: one to the Ottoman Empire and the other to Albania. He called the former the "general vatan" and the latter the "special vatan." Hasan Kaleşi, "Şemsettin Sami Fraşeri'nin Siyasi Görüşleri," 647.
- Tunaya, Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler, 373–74. For detailed information about Halil Menteşe, see Syed Tanvir Wasti, "Halil Mentese"; İsmail Arar, "Giriş," in Halil Menteşe'nin Anıları, 1–106.
- 11. Erik J. Zürcher, "Kosovo Revisited."
- 12. Ziya Gökalp, "Yeni Osmanlılar," 62–65. This article was originally published by the newspaper *Peyman* in Diyarbakır on July 12, 1909.
- 13. Ziya Gökalp, "Eskiliğin Mukavemeti," 26-29.
- 14. Yekta Bahir, "'Milli,' Daha Doğrusu 'Kavmi' Edebiyat Ne Demektir?" 162–67. Ali Canip used the nickname Yekta Bahir for this article.
- 15. Fuat Köprülü, "Edebiyatı Milliye," 3-7.
- Yeprad, October 15, 1910, 310, quoted in Ohannes Kılıçdağı, "The Bourgeois Transformation and Ottomanism among Anatolian Armenians after the 1908 Revolution."
- 17. Krikor Zohrab, "Hay Badkamavori Me Hashvedvutiune," in *Yerger* vol. 5, 390, quoted in Murat Koptaş, *Armenian Political Thinking in the Second Constitutional Period*.
- 18. Sati Bey, Vatan İçin Beş Konferans, 3, 23–25.
- 19. *Yeprad* 18, September 15, 1910, 287–88, quoted in Kılıçdağı, "The Bourgeois Transformation and Ottomanism."
- 20. Yeprad 1, November 1, 1909, 11, quoted in Kılıçdağı, "The Bourgeois Transformation and Ottomanism."
- 21. Tunaya, Türkiye'de Siyasi Partiler, 209.
- 22. Ali Seydi, "Askerliğin Milel-i Gayrimüslimeye Teşnili," *Tanin*, August 23, 1908, quoted in Uğur Peçe, *Greek Ottomans in the 1908 Parliament*.
- "Suret-i Nutk," İntibah (February 1910), 4, quoted in Benjamin Trigona Harany, The Ottoman Süryani from 1908 to 1914, 132–33.
- 24. Yeprad 1, January 1, 1911, 9, quoted in Kılıçdağı, "The Bourgeois Transformation and Ottomanism."
- 25. "Anasır-ı Gayrımüslimenin Askerliği," *Sadayı Millet*, November 3, 1909, quoted in Kerimoğlu, *İttihat Terakki ve Rumlar*, 268*n*.

- 26. Meclisi Mebusan Zabit Ceridesi, Devre 1, İçtima Senesi 1, vol. 5, 191.
- 27. Meclisi Mebusan Zabit Ceridesi, Devre 1, İçtima Senesi 2, vol. 5, 59–60.
- 28. Hüseyin Cahit, "Osmanlı Terakki ve İttihat Cemiyeti'nin Siyasi Programı," *Tanin*, September 25, 1908, quoted in Kerimoğlu, *İttihat Terakki ve Rumlar*, 219.
- 29. Mebusan Zabit Ceridesi, Devre 1, İçtima Senesi 1, vol. 4, 210.
- 30. Ibid., 211-12.
- 31. Tunaya, Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler, 130. Kazım Karabekir (1882–1948), who fought against the Bulgarian army in the Balkan Wars and became one of the most powerful generals during the War of Independence, mentioned in his memoirs the importance of the Balkans for the survival of Turkey: "Macedonia, are you going to remain in our hands? If you leave, will you drag all Turkey with you?" Kazım Karabekir, Hayatım, 365.
- 32. Leon Trotsky, The War Correspondence of Leon Trotsky, 268.
- 33. Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, Suyu Arayan Adam, 48–49.
- 34. Fuat Köprülü, "Ümit ve Azim," 139.
- 35. Tunaya, Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler, 562-63.
- 36. Ömer Seyfettin was a prominent modern Turkish nationalist and one of Turkey's well-known short story writers. He graduated from the military academy and served in the army until the Balkan Wars. He became a prisoner of war and was kept in a prison camp by the Greek army. After returning to Istanbul he resigned from the military and started writing articles in newspapers and journals. Seyfettin was an ardent supporter of the nationalist policies of the CUP.
- 37. Ziya Gökalp, "Türkleşmek, İslamlaşmak, Muasırlaşmak," 184-86.
- 38. Fuat Köprülü, "Türklük, İslamlık, Osmanlılık," 373–74.
- Fevzi Paşa, Garbi Rumeli'nin Suret-i Ziyaı ve Balkan Harbi'nde Garb Cephesi Harekatı, 4–5.
- 40. Turan is a Persian word for central Asia that literally means "the land of the Tur."
- 41. Ziya Gökalp, "Turan," 68.
- Aydemir, Suyu Arayan Adam, 54–55. Aydemir pointed out how the journal Türk Yurdu and the articles that it published changed his worldview from Ottomanism to Turkism.
- 43. Ibid., 57-58.
- 44. Ahmet Ağaoğlu, "Türk Alemi," 15–16.
- 45. Hülya Adak, "New Introduction," ix. *Yeni Turan* was translated into German in 1916 and later into Russian and Serbian.
- 46. Halide Edip Adıvar, *Yeni Turan*, 55–56. According to Ağaoğlu, *Yeni Turan* illustrated that Turkish nationalists were not chauvinists, as argued by their opponents: "There is not anybody left that does not read the novel *Yeni Turan* written by well-known author Miss Halide. The nationalist author summarized the intention and the ideal of the new movement in her novel. Nobody, not even the hardest opponent of the nationalist movement, can question the sincerity of Miss Halide. Is there such a feeling of revenge among the main characters of the novel? Do they want to harm other [ethnic] groups? Do they want to have more for Turks than for others?" Ahmet Ağaoğlu, "Matbuat," 295.
- 47. Tunaya, Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler, 603.
- 48. Ali Fuat Erden, Paris'ten Tih Sahrasına, 21.

- 49. During his visit in Medina Enver Paşa was psychologically in a condition of ecstasy. He constantly cried and prayed in the tomb of the Prophet Muhammad. Ali Fuat Erden, *Birinci Dünya Harbinde Suriye Hatıraları* (2003), 220–21.
- 50. Hasan Kayali, Arabs and Young Turks, 139-40.
- 51. Feroz Ahmad, The Making of Modern Turkey, 39.
- 52. Tunaya, Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler, 591–92.
- 53. Ziya Şakir, 1914–1918 Cihan Harbini Nasıl İdare Ettik, 112.
- 54. Ziya Şakir, 1914 Cihan Harbine Nasıl Girdik, 68.
- 55. Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, 351; Jacob M. Landau, *Exploring Ottoman and Turkish History*, 45.
- 56. Sultan Osman and Reşadiye were the two battleships constructed by Britain for the Ottoman Empire. Winston Churchill, who was the first lord of admiralty in August 1914, requisitioned these warships. Moreover, Britain refused to refund the payments of 4 million pounds to the Ottoman Empire for these battleships. Ziya Gökalp, Şiirler ve Halk Masalları, 90–94.
- 57. Ziya Gökalp, "Millet ve Vatan," 303.
- 58. Although Ömer Seyfettin gave weight to the unity between Turks and Arabs, he made a clear distinction between the territories inhabited by these two groups. According to him, Arabs were in the majority in the territories south of Kirkuk and Aleppo, which he called the "Arabian homeland": "the Turkish homeland includes Istanbul, Edirne, Konya, Adana, Sivas, Diyarbakır, Trabzon, Erzurum, Van, Bitlis, Ma'muretül-Aziz [Elazığ], and north of Mosul and Aleppo. There are few Greeks in the coastal areas of the Turkish homeland and they are migrating and leaving. In the eastern provinces of Erzurum, Van, and Bitlis Armenians are in the minority and their population is less than that of the Turks." It is important to note that roughly the same territories were claimed by the last Ottoman Parliament and the Kemalists after World War I as the "national territories": Ömer Seyfettin, "Türklük Mefkuresi," 83–85. This article was originally published in 1914.
- 59. Said Halim Paşa, Buhranlarımız, 110-11.
- 60. Mehmed Akif Ersoy, "Hala mı Boğuşmak?"
- 61. Ahmed Naim, *İslamda Kavmiyetçilik Yoktur*, 40–41. Ahmed Naim wrote a series of articles with the title "There Is No Nationalism in Islam" published in the newspaper *Sebilürreşad* in 1914. These articles were collected in a book published in 1916.
- 62. Tunaya, Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler, 295, 605.
- 63. Kemal H. Karpat, Ottoman Population (1830–1914).
- 64. François Georgeon, Türk Milliyetçiliğinin Kökenleri, 60.
- 65. Kayalı, Arabs and Young Turks, 14.
- 66. Edwin Pears, Forty Years in Constantinople, 299–300.
- 67. Kayalı, Arabs and Young Turks, 107.

Ambiguities of Turkism

Cultural and Intellectual Manifestations of Turkish National Thought

Umut Uzer

The emergence of Turkish national consciousness in the early twentieth century was closely linked to the political developments of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the Ottoman Balkans and the Middle East. Following the series of uprisings by Serbs, Greeks, Bulgarians, and later Albanians, Kurds, and Arabs and the corresponding territorial losses, the Turks' own national project seemed to be the only viable option for the leaders of Turkish-speaking Muslims in Anatolia, Istanbul, and Thrace. But the Turkish Muslims had different perceptions of national identity: while the literate urban intellectuals pursued and publicized European notions of nationalism, Muslim communities in peripheral areas of Anatolia were largely unaffected by such developments. They were led into fortifying an Islamic sense of collective identity, less through secular ideology and more due to actual daily repercussions of the persistent conflict with the Armenian Christians, which had reached new heights of intensity by World War I. The evolution of the Muslim-Ottoman identity into a Muslim-Turkish identity—especially for the intellectuals and the civil-military bureaucrats of the late Ottoman and early republican period—was set in motion in the aftermath of the Greco-Turkish War of 1897 and the Balkan Wars of 1912–13. Internalization of this identity by the masses was more limited, gradual, and ambivalent, as shown by the events of World War I.

The studies on Turkish nationalism and World War I are based on a set of problematic assumptions: the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) was a Turkish nationalist organization, and its nationalism informed its policies during the war. This nationalism, in turn, explains the

relocation of Armenians, because the main goal of the CUP leaders was to create a homogeneous and unified nation-state. This thesis ignores two interrelated issues: the idea of Turkish nationalism was debated only among a small circle of the Ottoman elite, whose writings had a very limited impact on the illiterate Muslim masses; and the war decisions were made not on the basis of ideology but rather due to security concerns on the ground, as aptly pointed out by Michael A. Reynolds. The main argument made in this chapter is that the CUP had a small circle of intellectuals who explored nationalist ideas, but they nonetheless remained Ottomanist and statist until the end of the war. Significant instances of mass mobilization during the war were in turn instigated by Islamic, rather than nationalist, sentiment. Similarly, even during the War of Independence, the Islamic concept of nation and homeland (*vatan*) was much more relatable to the rural population than abstract and relatively alien Turkish nationalism.

LATECOMERS TO NATIONALISM: TURKS AS RULERS OF AN EMPIRE

Nationalists in the twentieth century have argued, in retrospect, for the existence of Turkish national consciousness throughout the centuries. While certain historical texts or monuments such as the Orhun monuments and Kaşgarlı Mahmud's *Divan-i Lugat it-Türk* might contain elements of Turkish national sentiments, for the majority of the populace (including the literati) Turkishness was either nonexistent or latent in the subconscious. Furthermore, these sentiments cannot be equated with the modern concept of nationalism, with its mass appeal for the populace at large.

According to one analysis, feelings of Turkishness existed in folk literature throughout the Ottoman centuries and were stronger among the common people rather than the educated classes. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries nationalisms of the subject peoples of the empire and the migration of Turks from Russia contributed to the awakening of Turkish national consciousness. Moreover, "Ottoman and Turkish forms of nationalism developed in response" to colonialism as Ottomans were losing territories against great powers as well to their former subject peoples.

Hüseyin Namık Orkun, one of the Turkish nationalist authors writing in 1944, agreed that Turcological studies by French, Russian, Hungarian, German, and other European studies have contributed in awakening

national consciousness. He averred that the Orhun scriptures of the seventh century and the books of Mahmud of Kashgar from the eleventh century contained feelings of Turkishness and belief in the superiority of the Turks. Yet the major factor that began to make these precursors more meaningful within the late Ottoman context was the growing reaction to the separatist tendencies and rebellions of non-Turkish peoples in the Ottoman Empire.³ In this sense Turkish nationalism emerged as a consequence of the political defeats and uprisings by non-Turkish peoples in the Ottoman Empire. During the Greco-Turkish War of 1897, for instance, Mehmet Emin Yurdakul, who was later to be dubbed the "national poet," wrote the poem starting with the words "I am a Turk," in a way initiating the larger ideological debate in the late Ottoman society.

THE NATIONAL POET: MEHMET EMIN YURDAKUL

When the Cretan insurrection erupted, Crete was still part of the Ottoman state. The rebels were provided with weapons and volunteers by Greece, culminating in the Greco-Turkish War in 1897. The Ottoman victory over Greece caused jubilation in Ottoman Turkey,⁴ as a result of which Yurdakul wrote the poem "I am a Turk, / My religion and race are sublime."

Thus this Ottoman Muslim intellectual clarified the identity crisis in the country with these words in favor of Turkishness. As Yurdakul took such a position, the existing ideological rivalry of Ottomanism, Islamism, and Turkism was yet to get resolved in any meaningful way for the Turkish-speaking Ottomans.

Yet Yurdakul began to command a larger circle of fame. When he published *The Turkish Poems* (*Türkçe Şiirler*) in 1899, his work was applauded by Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and Yusuf Akçura. Orientalist E. J. W. Gibb wrote in his letter in Turkish to Yurdakul from London on June 6, 1899: "You have read the hearts of your citizens without looking at the East nor the West. Sir, Turkish poetry has waited for you for six centuries." Other scholars such as Vladimir Minorsky and Armenius Vambery also commended the poet. İsmail Gaspıralı, the cultural pan-Turkist from Crimea, acclaimed Yurdakul's use of simple and comprehensible Turkish, being critical of the flowery Ottoman language. Thus Yurdakul managed to excite the Turkish intellectuals' feelings and demonstrated the relevance of Turkish national identity in the debate over the survival of the empire.

Yurdakul continued his publications in the same spirit. During the subsequent Balkan Wars (1912–13) the poet reminded the Turkish people to "hide your revenge as a sharp knife" and "never forget" the perpetrators of the war. As observed in such writings, the Balkan Wars presented another turning point in the evolution of Turkish nationalism, even though its appeal was confined to a circle of intellectuals and some parts of the reading public. The level of interest in nationalism among the Muslim people at large remains difficult to measure. It is an elusive topic that lacks a systematic treatment.

UNITY IN LANGUAGE, ACTION, AND IDEAS: İSMAIL GASPIRALI

Yurdakul was not to remain alone in his ideological orientation. Originally from Crimea, İsmail Gaspıralı (1851–1914) hailed from a wealthy Tatar family. He attended high school and the military academy in Moscow, experiencing the dominant pan-Slavic atmosphere. Gaspıralı tried to serve in the Ottoman army during the war in Crete in 1897, but the Russian authorities prevented him from sailing from Crimea to Crete. Gaspıralı called for the unification of Turks, including the Tatars and Turkestanis, by establishing a language comprehensible to all the Turks around the world. With this aim in mind he started publishing the newspaper *Tercüman* in 1883. He had to be cautious of Russian censorship, so he insisted that the initial phase of Turkism would be to unite the different Turkish dialects spoken around the Turkish world, postponing political unity for the coming generations. 11

In 1911 Gaspirali's newspaper included the motto "Unity in Language, Action, and Ideas" ("Dilde, Fikirde, İşde Birlik"). He was adamant that Ottomanism prevented the emergence of Turkish national identity, which he expected to emerge in a few years. ¹² Gaspirali wanted to create a literary Turkish language as a stepping stone for the political unity of all Turkic peoples and was very much influenced by Ottoman defeats on the battlefield as well as developments in Russia.

HÜSEYINZADE ALI AND THE IDEAL OF PAN-TURKISM

Another influential Turkish nationalist was Hüseyinzade Ali (1864–1941). Originally from Azerbaijan, he experienced pan-Slavism during his study of medicine at St. Petersburg University, which was popular

among the intellectuals of the Russian Empire. He moved to the Ottoman Empire in 1889, where he attended and taught at the Medical School in Istanbul. According to certain narratives he helped establish the CUP. He espoused pan-Turkism and the three policies of Turkification, Islamization, and Europeanization, subsequently influencing Ziya Gökalp. In other words, Ali was one of the significant members of the CUP, directly affecting the ideological worldview of the Young Turk generation. His influence was felt by the Turks living in the Caucasus and among the literation Istanbul.

THE CUP AND NATIONALISM

As Celal Sahir wrote, "Don't you ever forget Edirne. The time for revenge will come, don't forget your vengeance." ¹⁴

Turkism was one of the political currents popular in the CUP, together with the two other currents of Islamism and Ottomanism. But Turkism never achieved hegemonic status among its leaders or throughout the country, particularly because Turkish nationalism would have had a negative impact on the cohesion of society and polity in a multinational empire. Therefore it remained one of the ideologies of the Young Turks, only achieving hegemony with the rise of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and the establishment of the Republic throughout the 1920s.

The first article of the program of the CUP promised the liberation of all Ottomans without distinction of race and religion from oppression and captivity by the repromulgation of the constitution (Basic Law). The oath taken before becoming a member of the CUP refers to the unity and progress of the Ottoman nation (Milleti Osmaniye) and to Islam. Despite these characterizations M. Şükrü Hanioğlu argues that the CUP had already adopted Turkish nationalism by 1906. This seems to be an early date to talk about the dominance of Turkish nationalism within the CUP circles. In fact Young Turks implemented Muslim nationalism by "ethnicizing of religion" and used the various ideological currents such as Ottomanism, Islamism, and Turkism as tools in their policies. ¹⁷

Thus Carter Findley's assertion that "the entrenched assumption that the Young Turks were Turkish nationalists needs reexamination" is appropriate. Ottomanism was manifested before the Balkan Wars in the idea of unity of elements (*ittihad-i anasır*) with some emphasis on encouraging all peoples to learn Turkish. The Balkan Wars not only brought the desertion of Greek and Bulgarian troops but also Muslim Turkish refugees in Istanbul, not seen since the 1877–78 war with the Russians.

Consequently, after the Ottomans lost the Balkans, Anatolia was reconceptualized as the "core territory" of the country. 18

This did not mean an automatic move toward Turkish nationalism, however. The empire still controlled Syria, Iraq, Palestine, and Arabia. Hence Islamic identity was propagated in those lands, with more leeway for Arabic to be used in the courts and schools during the Young Turk era.¹⁹ In fact nationalist authors such as Akçura and Ahmet Ağaoğlu portrayed World War I as a just war aiming at the liberation of both the Turkish world and the Islamic world.²⁰ These two politicians (hailing from the lands of Volga and Azerbaijan, respectively) undoubtedly envisaged the liberation of their homelands as well the greater Turkish homeland, including all the lands of the Turkic peoples.

The Gallipoli (Çanakkale) Campaign in 1915 certainly was one of the significant turning points during World War I, arousing "Turkish national consciousness." It was one of the few victories for the Ottoman army during that war (in addition to Kut al-Amara and victories in the Caucasus).

Enver Paşa, the strongest man in Ottoman Turkey between 1913 and 1918, had elements of the three prevalent ideologies in his own worldview. In one of his letters to his wife (Naciye Sultan) in 1911, he informed her that he was in Libya organizing the resistance against the Italian occupation of the Ottoman province. He expressed his view that protecting a Muslim country was very much in line with his thinking, even reminding his wife that her preference had always been to struggle against non-Muslims. The biographer of Enver Paşa, Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, also argued that Enver's conception was based on the idea of the Ottoman nation (*millet-i Osmaniye*) which was rather vague and without a clearcut aim. While Enver was patriotic, his loyalty to the Ottoman nation, country, and religion was rather undefined, especially in the struggle in Balkans. In other words, an identity crisis was prevalent at the end of the Ottoman Empire and the early days of republican Turkey.

For Yusuf Akçura, in contrast, the question of identity was resolved in favor of Turkishness. He was more ready to contemplate the end of the Ottoman Empire: "Even if an accident, God forbid, were to happen to the Ottoman Empire, the Turkish nation will eternally remain in existence." In fact Akçura was critical of the CUP for still having remained Ottomanist in 1912, 25 which was the main reason why he never joined the CUP.

Therefore the CUP cannot be characterized as the party of the Turks or Turkish nationalists. It was a national party, but it defended the Ottoman nation and wanted the state to be protected from dissolution, remaining Ottomanist until its closure in 1918. Furthermore, Turkish nationalism was complementary to Ottomanism in its objective to save the state. The CUP and its party branch had a multiethnic character, including Armenian candidates such as Bedros Halacyan representing them at the Ottoman parliament in 1908 and 1914. They even collaborated in elections with the Armenian nationalist party, the Dashnaks, which puts into question depictions of the CUP as leading an ethnically based campaign against Christians in general and Armenians in particular.²⁶

The Balkan Wars undoubtedly led to a shock among the Turkish people. Artillery fire from the battle front in Çatalca, in the European part of Turkey, was heard in Istanbul. Furthermore, wounded soldiers and refugees crowded the capital.²⁷ It was particularly shocking that the Turks had lost against their former subjects, stereotypically characterized as "Bulgarian milkmen, Serbian pig shepherds, and even Greek tavern patrons."²⁸ One author labeled this defeat as the victory of Bulgarian education over the Turkish system.²⁹

It should also be emphasized that the Balkan Wars caused the ideological defeat of Ottomanism, implemented ever since the nineteenth century as "a secular state ideology," promising equality for all the religious and ethnic minorities in the empire. Thus the Young Turk leadership began to flirt with Islamism. Religion was one of the important links between the Turks and Arabs, the two most populous peoples of the remaining empire.³⁰ Consequently "the CUP moved from secular Ottomanism to what can be described as 'Islamic Ottomanism." ³¹ In other words, belief in a secular Ottoman identity encompassing the Greeks and Bulgarians was no longer valid and the emphasis on Islamic solidarity increased. This also had some repercussions for policy making. As Erol Köroğlu claims, the policies of pan-Turkism and pan-Islamism during World War I were based on the defeat in the Balkans. The aim of those irredentist policies was the material or psychological compensation for those losses.³² Therefore the effect of ideology cannot be offered as the overarching variable to explain Ottoman war aims. It should be stressed that the security needed to protect against Russian expansionism (particularly in the Caucasus and the Balkans) was critical in the empire's grand strategy during World War I.

The Balkan Wars radically changed the self-identity of all or most peoples of the Ottoman peoples, including the Turks, Greeks, and Albanians. National consciousness for these peoples was not precisely determined and defined before the war.³³ The Balkan Wars caused "those who were called Turk by everyone except themselves" to begin "to use this

name" as their national identity.³⁴ In other words, Turkish and Islamic identities were used simultaneously by the political leadership. Turkishness was on the rise for a few years, stagnated for a few years, and then rose again with the advent of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in the 1920s.

Halide Edip Adıvar, one of the few female intellectuals of the time, called on the sultan one month after the Balkan Wars to protect Istanbul if for no other reason than to protect the chastity of the women there. She wrote that the Bulgarians were "making history," while the Ottomans were "burying our history." Adıvar was also adamant that the destruction of Bulgaria should be the main objective of Turkey. She was aware that the existence of an enemy was essential for the construction of national consciousness. In 1912 she openly abandoned Ottomanism and rhetorically asked where the path to Turan was. ³⁶

Despite such individual transformations, evidence to illustrate that Turkish nationalism began to shape the policies of the CUP after the Balkan Wars remains scant. In fact Ottomanism continued to be a strong current among the party cadres and the bureaucracy.³⁷ As no ideology dominated the leadership cadres, ideas were essentially used for the prolongation of the existence of the Ottoman state. As an example of the instrumental nature of these ideas, the declaration of World War I called for a "war for the nation, religion, and ideal." The identity of the nation was not at all clear at this point for the majority of the people residing in the territory of the Ottoman Empire.

The CUP implemented pan-Islamic and Ottomanist strategies during World War I, but both of these policies were to a large extent abandoned after the Arab revolt in 1916. After World War I Turkish nationalism increasingly became secular, moving away from pan-Turkism toward a Turkey-based nationalism. Consequently it should be acknowledged that Ottomanism remained as a "state reflex" and a "main reference point," which was not openly confronted by any political party or politician until 1918 or even until the advent of Atatürk.³⁹

Until the end of World War I nationalism "had no meaning" for the majority of Turks. Islamic affiliations were predominant among the Muslims of the empire. It would be incorrect to label the Young Turk era as dominated by Turkish nationalism, because the CUP did not have "a coherent agenda." Saving and protecting the state was the ultimate objective of the party. Its members included people of numerous other ethnicities, such as Arabs, Albanians, and Jews as well as Armenians and Greeks in the early days of the opposition. For instance, the editor of *Tanin*, Hüseyin Cahit, said that the Ottoman Empire had never had a policy of Turkification. ⁴¹ Another significant point is that

Ottoman strategies during World War I were not overwhelmingly driven by pan-Turkism. Their objective was to curtail Russian expansionism by establishing buffer zones between Russia and Turkey.⁴² In other words, strategic and pragmatic considerations were paramount during World War I for the leadership of Turkey.

As regional strategic alliances and rivalries increasingly came to characterize the political choices of the Young Turk elites after they came to power in 1908, Turkish cultural and political activism similarly found room for development in the relatively liberal period in the immediate aftermath of the constitutional revolution. Among such clubs and associations established after the 1908 revolution was the Turkish Society (Türk Derneği), a nationalist club that served as a significant academic and cultural organization with political connotations for Turkish nationalism. Perhaps the coming of Young Turks to power did not fully spell out Turkish nationalism as a political project, but Turkism as a cultural and intellectual accumulation gained pace.

INTELLECTUALS AND TURKISH NATIONALISM: THE TURKISH SOCIETY AND TURKISH POWER

The Turkish Society was established in 1908, only five months after the promulgation of the Second Constitutional period in modern Turkish history. Prominent Kazan Tatar intellectual Yusuf Akçura told fellow nationalist academics Necip Asım Yazıksız and Veled Çelebi İzbudak that he wanted the initiation of a nationalist society studying Turkish history and language. Other prominent members included Ahmed Midhat Efendi, Emrullah Efendi, Bursalı Mehmed Tahir, Rıza Tevfik, Ahmed Ferit Tek, and an Armenian professor from Istanbul University, Agop Boyaciyan. The aim of the society was "to try to learn about and teach the works, activities, conditions and locations in the past and at present of all tribes known as Turks, i.e. unearthing the old Turkish works, histories, languages" and "to improve our language so that it becomes a clear, simple, beautiful language suitable for scientific use."43 Even though the aims of the society seemed to be purely academic, it should be kept in mind that historical and linguistic studies have always been among the most important elements in the rise of national consciousness (hence nationalism) in all forms of nationalism.

Turcologists such as Vladimir Gordlevsky, the Hungarian priest Imre Karacson, Martin Hartman, and Andon Tingir were also members of the society. Crown Prince Yusuf İzzettin Efendi became the honorary chair of the society and Fuad Raif was its chair. In 1912 the society was

closed. Most of its members subsequently joined the Turkish Hearth (Türk Ocağı). The Turkish Society had its first branch in Rusçuk (Ruse) in Bulgaria, with other branches in İzmir and Kastamonu in Turkey and Budapest, Hungary. Turcologist Armenius Vambery became the honorary chair of the Budapest branch, which aimed at establishing fraternal ties between Hungarians and Turks and the scholarly study of their respective languages.⁴⁴

The journal of the Turkish Society attributed utmost significance to the sophistication of the Turkish language and the spread of Ottoman Turkish to Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, Kashgar, and Bukhara, where various Turkic languages were already spoken. It was critical of the lack of knowledge in Turkey about fellow Turks living in Azerbaijan and in Central Asia and praised European Turcologists for having expanded information on the language and history of all the Turkic peoples. 45 The contributors to the journal were also adamant that Turkish should be simplified by refraining from the extreme usage of Arabic and Persian words. They even contemplated the use of the Latin alphabet for Turkish but at the end rejected it in return for a reformed Arabic script. They praised the Ottoman army for having begun using Turkish words instead of Arabic or Persian vocabulary in their instructions and sent an open letter to a Christian member of parliament in the Ottoman senate to praise him for having called for a simple and comprehensible Turkish rather than the flowery Ottoman used by the literary and official circles. 46

In fact Ömer Seyfettin and most other nationalist writers were already calling for simplification of the language. For instance, Seyfettin wrote a letter to his friend Ali Canip calling for a "revolution in language" by getting rid of Arabic and Persian composites, hence simplifying the Turkish language.⁴⁷

We can observe cultural nationalism in the articles of *Türk Derneği*. They called for Turkish to be spoken adequately by all the non-Turkish groups in the Ottoman state and portrayed Turkish as a link among all the peoples of the empire. The authors also argued that Turkish had been neglected throughout the centuries and should be developed academically and used throughout the public space. Also, all signs should be in Turkish in addition to other languages. Furthermore, the journal emphasized that Turkish blood was being spilled all around the homeland, 48 which demonstrated a latent form of Turkish nationalism in the articles.

With the utter defeat of the Ottoman state at the end of the Balkan Wars in 1913 Turkish nationalism began to gain greater intellectual credibility. Consequently the Turkish Power Association (Türk Gücü

Cemiyeti) was established, with the goal to "promote physical education" and "improve the health of Turks, reinforce their physical strength, and raise active generations as a contingency in times of hardship." "National sports" such as wrestling, horseback riding, archery, and shooting were promoted. In 1914 the CUP set up the Ottoman Power Society (Osmanlı Güç Dernekleri) for the purpose of preparing youths and citizens for war exercise through sports. ⁴⁹ In 1913 the official slogan of Türk Gücü was "the strength of a Turk is enough for anything." One of the members of the organization, Kuzucuoğlu Tahsin, said that the real aim of the society was to reach Turan. ⁵⁰ Atatürk was to use similar language regarding the strength of Turks to increase confidence in nationalism by saying "One Turk is the equivalent of the entire world." ⁵¹

In 1913 children's periodicals such as World of Children (Cocuk Dünyası) functioned as the children's version of Turkish Homeland (Türk Yurdu). Prominent nationalist writers and intellectuals such as Gökalp, Yurdakul, Ismayıl Hakkı Baltacıoğlu, and Seyfettin wrote for this journal, which demonstrated that the periodical and the education of youth were taken seriously by all the contributors. For instance, Gökalp wrote national nursery tales, and others wrote about various aspects of Turkishness. Another periodical for children was Playground (Cocuk Bahçesi). Its columnist Baha Tevfik emphasized poems about "revenge," very much under the influence of the Balkan Wars.⁵² For example, the poem "Turkish Child," published in the journal *Playground* on May 14, 1914, was about how the Balkans should never be forgotten by the Turkish people.⁵³ A poem published in Children's World on November 27, 1913, was called "The Song of Revenge" ("Öç Türküsü"). It labeled Greeks and Bulgarians as the enemy for having massacred Turks and called on children to take their revenge: "Revenge is your faith."54

During this time one of the professors of the School of Government (Mekteb-i Mülkiye) was the poet Lastik Said, who became famous for the following poem:

Those who want Arabic go to the Arabs. Those who wish Persian go to Iran. Franks go to the land of Franks. As we are Turks, we need Turkish.⁵⁵

The nationalists had a strong cadre of intellectuals at Istanbul University (Darülfünun), including Gökalp, Ağaoğlu, Halim Sabit, and Şemseddin Günaltay. Günaltay was born in eastern Turkey in Kemaliye,

Erzincan. He sympathized with the Young Turks and served as a teacher in Cyprus, where he detected the nationalism of the Greek Cypriots. He was also made aware of Arab nationalism after visiting Syria. As a student at Lausanne University he came into contact with students hailing from different backgrounds in the Ottoman Empire and understood their Turcophobia. ⁵⁶ Experience with rival nationalisms and the simultaneous uprisings by non-Turkish people resulted in the emergence of national feelings among these intellectuals.

After the Turkish Society closed in 1912, the Turkish Knowledge Society (Türk Bilgi Derneği) opened in 1913 with Emrullah Efendi as its chair. Aiming to be a scholarly academy, the society had sections on Turcology, Islamic studies, philosophy, and sociology as well as Turkism, to "provoke beneficial actions on behalf of Turkishness." Veteran nationalists Hamdullah Suphi, Ömer Seyfettin, Mehmed Emin, and Dr. Nazım were among the members of the society.⁵⁷

TURKISH HEARTH

Initially the journal *Turkish Homeland* (*Türk Yurdu*) was established in 1911 by a number of Ottoman and Russian Turks including Yurdakul, Ağaoğlu, Hüseyinzade Ali, and Akçura. This journal consequently became the official organ of the Turkish Hearth. Just like *Tercüman*, the new publication aimed at writing in a simple and comprehensible manner for all the Turks living in the world, further articulating a common ideal for all of them. ⁵⁸ Nevertheless, the clear wishes of this publication to reach the minds of Turks everywhere could not come to fruition without an adequate educational infrastructure that would bring under its influence the illiterate Turks who lived in provincial areas.

Even though Turkish Hearth (Türk Ocakları) started operating on June 20, 1911, the official date of its opening is thought to be March 25, 1912. Ahmed Ferit Tek, Yurdakul, and Akçura served as its chairs in those early two years. In 1913 Hamdullah Suphi Tanriöver (1885–1966) became the president and continued in this position until 1931, when the Hearth was closed as part of the policy of centralization in that decade in Kemalist Turkey.⁵⁹

The organization promulgated its first statute in 1912, aiming at the development of the Turkish language and the Turkish nation and promoting education while at the same time specifying its lack of interest in politics. During the Gallipoli campaign in 1915 Enver Paşa asked a group of members of the Hearth to go to the front and energize the troops

fighting against the British. They were nationalists, so members willingly went to the front, while others participated in the Ottoman army throughout the war.⁶⁰ In his speeches between 1919 and 1921 Tanriöver expressed his confidence that the occupation forces would be expelled from Turkey. On May 30, 1919, he said that Istanbul and Anatolia were to remain in Turkish hands.⁶¹ In the last session of the Ottoman parliament Tanriöver supported the national movement of Atatürk, organizing resistance against the occupiers.

As far as Tanriöver's nationalism is concerned, he advocated cultural unity for all the Turks in the world, while Adıvar advocated that the activities of the organization should be limited to the boundaries of Turkey. In contrast, Tanriöver believed in the existence of a single and unified Turkish nation. He was rather explicit and exuberant: "Wherever there are Turks, there is a Turkish hearth. This hearth is sometimes visible and sometimes not. The hearth is not a building; the hearth is an idea, a love and a faith." Correspondingly, turning the Turkish people from a religious community into a nation was presented as one of the aims of the Turkish Hearth. ⁶⁴

In regard to the emergence of nationalism, Tanriöver was against the argument that Western experts on Turkish culture contributed to the rise of national consciousness. Instead this was a culmination of the efforts "by our own poets and scholars not inspired by the studies of foreign scholars such as [Wilhelm] Radloff and [Vilhelm] Thomsen." He stressed the significance of poets such as Yurdakul for the "ignition of Turkish nationalism." They were in fact "the new prophets" of our time. 65

ÖMER SEYFETTIN

Ömer Seyfettin (1884–1920), who was born in Gönen in western Turkey, advocated nationalism in language and called for the unification of all Turks. He welcomed World War I, just like Gökalp did, and was confident that the Ottoman army would reach all the way to "the motherland Turan," destroy Russia, and create a pan-Turkic empire under the leadership of the Ottoman state. It was to be expected that all nations would aim to expand their territories. ⁶⁶ Hence Turkish unification was a normal desire for all Turks.

As far as nationalism was concerned, Seyfettin argued against the idea of racism and was of the opinion that there were "no pure races left" in the world. In his judgment, sharing the same language, religion, and education would suffice to constitute a nation. But he expressed the opinion

that political boundaries would not be able to separate members of the same nation, ⁶⁷ implying the necessity of an all-Turkish union.

Seyfettin fought in the Balkan Wars against Ottoman Turkey's enemies and was captured as prisoner of war by the Greek army. He was critical of the troops in the Ottoman army who lacked a national ideal, a conception of a homeland, and discipline. In fact he likened the barracks to the Tower of Babel, where all kinds of languages were spoken. He was particularly critical of Pomak (Bulgarian Muslim) and Albanian soldiers who spoke no Turkish. In the town of Berat on December 6, 1912, he observed the animosity of Albanians toward Turks: they hoisted the Albanian flag and expressed satisfaction at the defeat of the Turks. This state of affairs made him more sensitive to the protection of the Turkish homeland.

In a similar vein one of the heroes of the Turkish national movement (1919–22), Kazım Karabekir, and other officers during their tenure in the Balkans in the first half of the twentieth century called for Islamic solidarity between Turks and Albanians and argued that as a single nation they were all kin. Karabekir, however, had come to appreciate that there was no such thing as an Ottoman nation and that even Albanian soldiers were feeling lukewarm toward the Turks. Consequently the only logical thing to do was to create a Turkish entity, as "we were in the century of nationality." Furthermore, in his time in Monastir (Manastir) in Macedonia Karabekir turned the above-mentioned poem of Yurdakul into a hymn to the legion, demonstrating the ideological and personal links of the Turkish intelligentsia in the first quarter of the twentieth century.

As an important figure in the journal *Young Pens* (*Genç Kalemler*), published in Salonika, Seyfettin, together with Gökalp, aimed to simplify language and get rid of Arabic-Persian composites.⁷⁰ They were adamant that Istanbul Turkish was to become the unifying literary language of "100 million blood brothers" in the Turkish world.⁷¹

Needless to say, Gökalp influenced Seyfettin. This can be seen in Seyfettin's book *Tomorrow's Turan State*, published in 1914, which quoted Gökalp's poem: "The land of the Muscovites shall be destroyed. Turkey shall grow and become Turan." Both nationalists were exuberant and hopeful regarding the prospects of the Ottoman Empire vis-à-vis tsarist Russia. They were proven wrong with the developments during and after World War I as far as pan-Turkism is concerned, but they were successful in contributing to the ideational background for the establishment of a Turkish nation-state.

ANATOLIAN NATIONALISM AGAINST TURANISM: THE DEBATE BETWEEN ZIYA GÖKALP AND HALIDE EDIP ADIVAR

A major debate occurred on the pages of the Turkish press and in the halls of the Turkish Hearth regarding territorial versus ethnic/expansionist nationalism. Adıvar, one of the prolific women writers of the late Ottoman period, argued in Vakit on June 30, 1918, that Turkey should focus on its own "house" rather than thinking about sending teachers to Azerbaijan, as demanded by the newly independent Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan. She was adamant that races were theoretical, whereas nations were "realities." 73 In the Turkish Hearth she prepared a report describing the area of operation for the organization to be "especially Turkey." This proposal was rejected by the majority. For instance, Fuat Köprülü said, "I reject pan-Turanism," but this did not mean that Turks were to indulge in selfishness and neglect other Turks, because "the great Turkish world cannot be built in any other manner" than to exist with solidarity among them. 74 Gökalp responded to Adıvar with the article "Turkism and Turkeyism" ("Türkçülük ve Türkiyecilik"), published on July 4, 1918, in his New Journal (Yeni Mecmua). He argued that being a Turk and being a native of Turkey were two different concepts. While the Young Ottomans were Turkeyists, such a conception did not include all the members of the nation: Azeri, Crimean, Kazan Tatar, Turkmen, Uzbek, and Kirgiz. Gökalp was of the opinion that cultural Turkism (harsi Türkçülük) entailed spreading Istanbul Turkish all over the Turkish world. In the article he also compared prospects of Turkish unification with German unification throughout the nineteenth century and adopted some of the methods of the German policies. Gökalp expressed his desire not to annex the Turkish territories in the Caucasus and Central Asia but to enable their independence by sending soldiers. He took a direct swipe at Adıvar: "To find the time to care for our houses, we have to have brotherly Turkish homes around us."75

This exchange between the two intellectuals demonstrates the increasing interest among certain nationalist thinkers in the fate of the Turks living beyond the boundaries of Ottoman Turkey. But it cannot be construed as Turkish nationalism having become hegemonic. Even at the time of these renegotiations over points of emphases during times of change, Islam continued to be the only unequivocally sustainable symbol of unity in the main areas of national conflict in Anatolia.

CONCLUSION

It would be correct to say that by 1918 Turkish cultural thought had become more national than it was before World War I.76 One reason is that at the end of the war a Turkish nation-state was an "accomplished fact of history," as the country for all purposes was ethnically and religiously homogeneous.⁷⁷ The combination of this and the efforts of the nationalists made the arduous task of creating a nation-state more acceptable to the cultural elite of the country. The ideological formation of Turkish nationalists through their intellectual works has been the main focus of many past studies. As shown here, however, unification of opinion among the intellectual nationalists of Istanbul was insufficient to produce a coherent ideology that could have a strong influence across the country. Furthermore, the bulk of Turkish Muslims, who were removed from the capital and disconnected from its literature, had to forge a sense of national identity in the heat of direct confrontations with Greek and Armenian nationalists. Their non-Muslim identity served to enhance the sense that Islam provided a social glue. Future studies in the field should concentrate on identifying aspects of national identity specifically among the many Turkish Muslims whose exposure to Turkish nationalistic influences was minimal.

NOTES

- 1. Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, 2.
- 2. Carter Findley, Turkey, Islam, Nationalism, and Modernity, 9.
- 3. Hüseyin Namık Orkun, Türkçülüğün Tarihi, 28, 37, 45.
- 4. Theodore George Tatsios, The Megali Idea and the Greek-Turkish War of 1897. Crete obtained its autonomy, however, under Prince George, son of King George, as high commissioner. Crete unified with Greece in 1913. Ibid., 136, 142.
- 5. Yusuf Akçura, Yeni Türk Devletinin Öncüleri, 111, 113.
- 6. Quoted in ibid., 119.
- 7. Ibid., 120-22.
- Mehmed Emin Yurdakul, May 16, 1912, in Ümit Kurt, "Türk'ün Büyük, Biçare Irkı," 175.
- Hakan Kırımlı, National Movements and National Identity among the Crimean Tatars (1905–1916), 33.
- 10. Akçura, Yeni Türk Devletinin Öncüleri, 67; Kırımlı, National Movements, 33.
- 11. Kırımlı, National Movements, 40.
- 12. Ibid., 124, 144.
- 13. Yusuf Sarınay, *Türk milliyetçiliğinin Tarihi Gelişimi ve Türk Ocakları (1912–1931*), 58; Akçura, *Yeni Türk Devletinin Öncüleri*, 161–63.

- 14. Celal Sahir, "Öç," *Türk Yurdu*, September 18, 1913, quoted in Kurt, "*Türk'ün Büyük, Biçare Irki*," 27. While I use Kurt for his utilization of primary resources and his direct quotations, he is among those scholars who portray the CUP as a Turkish nationalist organization, seeking to explain the homogenization of Anatolia as a "planned design" rather than a by-product of the war. He selectively uses the writings of a small group of intellectuals to argue for the existence of racism in the ideas of nationalist thinkers and explain the war policies of the Ottoman state. This is not a correct portrayal of their ideas, as racism was to later emerge in the 1930s among Turkish nationalists. See Umut Uzer, "Racism in Turkey: The Case of Huseyin Nihal Atsız," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 22, no. 1 (2002). Furthermore, regarding World War I Michael A. Reynolds's strategic explanations in "Buffers, Not Brethren" are more convincing than the unproven impact of ideologies on war decisions.
- 15. Kazım Karabekir, İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti, 1896–1909, 497, 517–18.
- 16. Quoted in Erik J. Zürcher. The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building, 217.
- 17. Erik J. Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building*, 230–31.
- 18. Findley, Turkey, Islam, Nationalism, and Modernity, 201-2.
- 19. Ibid., 202.
- 20. Kurt, "Türk'ün Büyük, Biçare Irkı," 210-11.
- 21. Findley, Turkey, Islam, Nationalism, and Modernity, 212.
- Letter dated October 20, 1911, from Enver Paşa to Naciye Sultan in Enver Paşa'nın Özel Mektupları, prepared by Arı Inan, 531.
- 23. Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, Makedonya'dan Orta Asya'ya Enver Paşa, 1:471, 474.
- 24. Quoted in Kurt, "Türk'ün Büyük, Biçare Irkı," 77.
- 25. Ibid., 160.
- Kemal Çiçek, "The Question of Genocidal Tendency in the Minority Politics of the Young Turks," 6, 10, 20.
- 27. Erol Köroğlu, Ottoman Propaganda and Turkish Identity, 47-48.
- 28. Kurt, "Türk'ün Büyük, Biçare Irkı," 200.
- 29. Ibid., 182.
- 30. Hasan Kayalı, Arabs and Young Turks, 15, 24.
- Eyal Ginio, "Mobilizing the Ottoman Nation during the Balkan Wars (1912–1913),"
 159.
- 32. Köroğlu, Ottoman Propaganda, 49, 191.
- 33. Isa Blumi, *Reinstating the Ottomans*, 6, 9.
- 34. Niyazi Berkes, The Development of Secularism in Turkey, 373.
- 35. Kurt, "Türk'ün Büyük, Biçare Irki," 163-65.
- 36. Ibid., 139, 94.
- 37. Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*, 329.
- 38. Sarınay, Türk milliyetçiliğinin Tarihi Gelişimi, 188.
- 39. Köroğlu, Ottoman Propaganda, xxi, 26.
- 40. Kayalı, Arabs and Young Turks, 3, 13.
- 41. Ibid., 4, 10, 83.
- 42. Michael A. Reynolds, "Buffers, Not Brethren," 137–38.
- 43. Cüneyd Okay, "The Journal *Türk Derneği* and Hungarian Studies of Turcology in the Pre-World War I Period," 304.

- 44. Ibid., 305, 307.
- 45. Cüneyd Okay, ed., *Türk Derneği*, 18, 42–44.
- 46. Ibid., 30, 205, 207, 211, 153-54.
- 47. Ömer Seyfettin, Balkan Harbi Hatıraları, 192, 195.
- 48. Okay, *Türk Derneği*, 16, 19, 38, 154.
- 49. Cüneyd Okay, "Sport and Nation Building," 152-53.
- 50. Köroğlu, Ottoman Propaganda, 60.
- 51. http://www.kulturturizm.gov.tr/TR,25421/turk-milleti.html.
- 52. Cüneyd Okay, "Eski Harfli Cocuk Dergileri," 514–15.
- 53. Cüneyd Okay, Meşrutiyet Çocukları, 93.
- 54. "Bil ki kinin imanındır," in ibid., 92.
- 55. Orkun, *Türkçülüğün Tarihi*, 59. "Arapça isteyen urbana gitsin, / Acemce isteyen İrana gitsin, / Frengiler Frengistana gitsin, / Ki biz Türküz, bize Türki gerekir [sic]."
- 56. Orkun, Türkçülüğün Tarihi, 82.
- 57. Ibid., 87.
- 58. Sarınay, *Türk milliyetçiliğinin Tarihi Gelişimi*, 112–13; Adile Ayda, *Sadri Maksudi Arsal* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, 1991), 74; Akçura, *Yeni Türk Devletinin Öncüleri*, 195.
- 59. Sarınay, Türk milliyetçiliğinin Tarihi Gelişimi, 125–27, 130, 132.
- 60. Ibid., 137, 147-48, 152.
- 61. Hamdullah Suphi Tanriöver, Dağyolu, 2:210-11.
- 62. Sarınay, Türk milliyetçiliğinin Tarihi Gelişimi, 139.
- 63. Tanriöver, *Dağyolu*, 1:126–27.
- 64. Ibid., 1:32.
- 65. Ibid., 1:143, 190, 2:108.
- 66. Seyfettin, Balkan Harbi Hatıraları, 12,17–19, 24.
- 67. Ibid., 21, 17.
- 68. Ibid., 126, 132, 149, 152, 166.
- 69. Karabekir, *Hayatım*, 375, 393.
- 70. Köroğlu, Ottoman Propaganda, 41.
- 71. Sarınay, Türk milliyetçiliğinin Tarihi Gelişimi, 102, 105.
- 72. Seyfettin, Balkan Harbi Hatıraları, 11.
- Halide Edip, "Evimize bakalım: Türkçülüğün Faaliyet Sahası," Vakit, June 30, 1918, in Köroğlu, Ottoman Propaganda, 102–3.
- 74. Köroğlu, Ottoman Propaganda, 104.
- 75. Ibid., 105, 106 (quotation)-7.
- 76. Ibid., 110.
- 77. Taha Parla, The Social and Political Thought of Ziya Gökalp, 1.

Beyond Jihad

Alexander Helphand-Parvus, Musa Kazım, and Celal Nuri on the Ottoman-German Alliance

York Norman

The Ottoman government's decision to attack Russia on October 29, 1914, was arguably the most critical juncture in the empire's six-century long history. The decision was made by the Young Turk regime with the knowledge that it would now enter World War I on the side of the Central Powers. Great Britain and France, the allies of Russia, were treatybound also to declare war on the Ottoman Empire. Convincing the population of the necessity of the war was absolutely critical to achieving victory, as the Ottomans' enemies were certain to play on the geopolitical, ethnic, and socioeconomic tensions that had undercut the empire's sovereignty throughout the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This was a relatively easy task in regard to Russia, given its long-standing support of Greek, Serbian, Bulgarian, and Armenian nationalists in their struggle to establish separate states throughout the Balkans and the Caucasus. As a result of territorial losses in these struggles, the Ottoman Empire was primarily populated by Sunni Muslims, including many refugees. Many were still bitter.

Making the case for war against Great Britain was more difficult, given that country's historical support for the empire's sovereignty, as seen, for example, during the Crimean War, when it intervened against the Russians. Neither did the British support the Christian nationalists in their most decisive victories against the sultanate, the Russo-Ottoman War (1877–78), and the First Balkan War (1912). The British may have had interests in the Arab lands of the Middle East, including a protectorate in Egypt, a client state in Kuwait, and growing relations with Iraq and the Hijaz. Unlike the Russians and the Christian nationalists, however,

they had not waged campaigns of ethnic cleansing against local Muslim populations.

As a result Ottoman propagandists who wrote at the time of their country's entry into the war have focused primarily on Great Britain as the main instigator. In particular they emphasized London's increasing conflicts with the empire over the construction of the Suez Canal (1869), the subsequent British colonization of Egypt (1882), and general British displeasure with Sultan Abdülhamid II's response to the Armenian uprisings of 1894–95 and the succeeding Young Turk attempts at centralization. The British, these propagandists claimed, recently had hindered the Berlin-to-Baghdad railway and blocked the sale of the dreadnoughts *Sultan Osman* and *Reşadiye* in 1914. They also allegedly plotted with Arab nationalists and Ottoman Liberal leaders in the years immediately preceding the war to weaken the empire. This led to British support of Russian demands for greater local autonomy for non-Turkish minorities from 1907 onward, culminating in talks to partition the Ottoman territories among the Entente.

Building in part on such literature, Mustafa Aksakal argued in *The Ottoman Road to War* that "the Ottoman leaders in 1914 made the only decision they believed could save the empire from partition and foreign rule." According to him, the Young Turk elite was convinced that Germany, the main foreign financial and military supporter of the empire since the 1880s under Kaiser Wilhelm II, was critical to guaranteeing Ottoman stability. With its powerful army, large population, and industrial base, Germany alone could overcome France and Belgium—Great Britain's key allies in Western Europe—and still challenge the Russian army in Eastern Europe and the British navy on the high seas. By attacking Russia along the Black Sea and in the Caucasus, and by contesting Great Britain's hold on Egypt, Afghanistan, and India, the Ottomans could play a pivotal role, thereby saving the Germans and themselves from destruction.

Other historians have regarded the Ottoman entry as a result of diplomatic intrigues between Enver Paşa, the minister of defense and the leading figure within the Young Turk government, and Kaiser Wilhelm II.⁴ They believe that Enver Paşa, who had firmly exercised power since 1913, after the empire's defeat in the First Balkan War, sought to use the war as an opportunity to expand the empire, particularly at the expense of Russia, the power that provided critical support to the Ottomans' foes in southeastern Europe. A successful campaign against the Russians necessitated naval superiority, which the Germans had provided by "donating"

the *Breslau* and *Goeben*, two state-of-the-art battle cruisers. The flip side of the bargain, according to this interpretation, was that the Ottomans would support the Germans' own struggle against their archenemy, Great Britain. The Ottomans would do this by threatening a "holy war" against British colonialism.

The following chapter is based on three key propagandists of Ottomanlanguage tracts from the fall of 1914, Alexander Helphand-Parvus (1867– 1924), Musa Kazım (1858–1920), and Celal Nuri (İleri) (1881–1938). It shows that governing circles were remarkably conflicted about the inevitability of the Ottoman entry into the war. While Parvus and Musa Kazım touted Ottoman economic, religious, and military imperatives, Celal Nuri was much more skeptical about such arguments, illustrating that public criticism among at least some of the political elite was apparent from the outset.⁵

The first of these writers, Parvus, a highly influential socialist in Russia and Germany, had recently come to the Ottoman Empire to help the Young Turks with issues of economic development. He wrote two key political tracts just prior to the declaration urging the Ottomans to join the Central Powers.⁶ Parvus's works viewed the conflict as essentially a geopolitical, anticolonialist struggle by Germany and the Ottomans against the British, French, and Russians. He claimed that joining Germany was the only logical option for those committed to the sovereignty of the Ottoman state. The second, Musa Kazım, the former chief religious authority (seyhülislam), wrote a pamphlet in support of the actual declaration of "holy war" explaining the religious justifications for the conflict. 8 This work was widely disseminated in Ottoman Turkish, Arabic, and Persian in an effort to rally Muslims both at home and abroad in favor of their cause. He was highly active among conservative Muslim circles, although he was accused by opponents of cynically working in league with the more Turkish nationalist members of the government. He worked hard to address that perception both among Arabs and among recent Muslim refugees to the empire. The third and final figure, Celal Nuri, was a prominent publicist and supporter of the Young Turk government. Although he was much more liberal and nationalist, he was very well known for his work on pan-Islamism, a movement that lionized the Ottoman Empire as the protector of all Muslim peoples. He wrote an extensive pamphlet entitled "Islamic Unity and Germany" (İttihad-i İslam ve Almanya) only two weeks after the war began. He was skeptical of Germany's intentions in favor of the war but still sought to reconcile Islamists and Turkish nationalists to that cause.

PARVUS ON THE WAR'S ECONOMIC IMPERATIVES

Parvus, the famous émigré socialist advisor to the Young Turks, saw the war as one of economic and geopolitical necessity. The British—"the real cause of the present war"—were committed in this struggle to partition and colonize the empire regardless of whether it stayed neutral or not.¹⁰ For Parvus, the only choice was to work in partnership with Germany as part of the Central Power alliance, because Berlin alone could provide the economic and military development that the Young Turks needed for survival.

Parvus brought unique qualifications to the table. He was one of the most outstanding socialists of his time, active in both German and Russian circles. Born of humble origins as a child of Jewish refugees from the Ukrainian Pale, he immigrated abroad in his late teens to Basel, Switzerland. After getting his PhD in political economy, he went to Germany for a career in politics and journalism. In 1897 he was the first to criticize German Social Democrat Eduard Bernstein's famous argument that Marxists could only achieve their ends through the ballot box as oversimplistic: extralegal means were sometimes also necessary.¹¹ This view won him the support of radicals throughout Europe, including Vladimir Lenin, Leon Trotsky, and Rosa Luxemburg. He went with Trotsky back to Russia to help lead the 1905 revolution. In its wake Parvus inspired Trotsky to write his theory of permanent revolution and also criticized imperialism in general as a process of exploitation that left colonies in a worse socioeconomic situation than before. He saw war as providing an opportunity to bring about global revolution, ultimately involving the Western European powers that advocated imperialism.¹²

Parvus then came to Ottoman Turkey, where he worked as an advisor to the Young Turk government from 1910 to 1915. He helped bring about the "national economy" (Milli İktisat)—a series of protectionist measures aimed at developing a modern political economy through abolishing Capitulations to the leading foreign imperialist powers, limiting the inflow of foreign manufactured goods, and establishing high tariffs to foster internal industrial development. He became especially influential after the outbreak of the Balkan Wars, during which he helped facilitate trade in strategic goods between the empire and Germany.¹³

Parvus remained in Istanbul even after World War I broke out and began publicly advocating that the Young Turks go to war. To him, Turkey's interests were in alignment with Germany and international socialism in this global struggle.

All had a common enemy in Great Britain, the exemplar of modern imperialism, according to Parvus. Britain "forced its colonies to accept protectionist customs and tariffs that would keep taxes low for the English alone, thereby subjecting them completely to the economy of the home country." ¹⁴

British hostility toward others had in fact "characterized their whole foreign-policy":

Before 1860, England could impose its will in the Near and Far East with impunity, as seen during the Crimean War or in its campaigns against China. England was at its high point geopolitically. Who would dare to question English power? English industry was so productive that no one contemplated that anyone could be a rival. British naval power also seemed absolute, and its colonies expanded greatly throughout the world. Yet in the ensuing years the English became much more reactionary.¹⁵

The British were antagonistic to the Ottomans, whom they wished "to stagnate, both militarily and economically." They wanted access to their "raw materials and commercial markets" and used "free trade to suffocate industrial development." The British refused to finance railroads and other economic development projects in the empire. They only helped construct the Suez Canal, but that was "all part of a plan to turn Egypt into a colony" and tear it permanently from the empire. ¹⁶

London had its sights on seizing Iraq from the Young Turks, in Parvus's eyes. Although it had already had a client in the sheikh of Kuwait, taking Basra and Baghdad was "key to securing its sea route to India." The British also wanted Iraq because of its growing demand for oil: "They use it for lighting, heating and to power their fleets. If the Entente wins the war, Britain will definitely seize petroleum-rich land from Turkey." 17

Regardless of whether it entered the war or not, much of the empire would be partitioned. Whatever remained in the rump state would be subject to Britain's economic hegemony: "the country's independence would be at an end." ¹⁸

The one country that distracted the British from achieving these ends was Germany, in Parvus's opinion. The rise of German industrial might signaled the end of Great Britain as the global economic hegemon. In fact German productivity and efficiency had undermined British control over European and American markets in recent decades. Britain was even feeling this pressure at home, as seen in a recent law that required that all

imported German manufactured goods be labeled "'made in Germany.'... Contrary to their hopes, however, this label made German goods even more desirable." The British hoped that the war would decimate Germany and end this economic rivalry.

Germany in fact looked to the Ottomans as an ally in this struggle. The Germans sought a way to project their economic and military influence from Europe to Asia. The Ottoman Empire provided such a land bridge in the form of the Berlin-to-Baghdad railway. This rail line, begun in 1888 under Sultan Abdülhamid II, would remain as important to Germany as the Trans-Siberian Railroad was to Russia: "Even if Germany is victorious, and uses its resources and war compensation to build up its naval forces, it will remain at a disadvantage due to English control of Gibraltar and Egypt." 20

The Ottomans benefited as well from this key transportation route: "The railway also had the effect of awakening the Turks from the sleep-iness that they were in until then: it filled the country with new life." Here Parvus undoubtedly was referring to the railway's role in integrating Iraq more firmly with Anatolia, making it easier to defend the province from attack. This became clear in the course of the war. Baghdad fell only in 1917, and the Ottoman army held onto much of northern Iraq even at the time of the armistice—thanks largely to reinforcements brought into the region, transported much of the way by train. A second rail line from Anatolia to Medina through Damascus likewise aided the Ottoman defense.

Parvus also counted on the Young Turks' modernization program to reinvigorate the country: "If these reforms are successful, it is certain that Turkey will become a great Muslim power from the Black Sea to the Persian Gulf. [It will be] a critical ally to Germany and Austria-Hungary.... [They] will inspire the peoples of the...East. But if they do not succeed, Turkey will be partitioned and colonized."²²

"Reforms" referred to the Ottoman Empire's modernization program. In Parvus's eyes, this transformation would begin when the Young Turks eliminated the Capitulations and declared war on Great Britain and its allies, clearing the path toward commercial development. Germany would assist the Ottomans financially and technologically, as it did with the establishment of the Berlin-to-Baghdad railway. At the same time, the Young Turks should modernize their military by accepting German advisors for its army and acquiring German-made modern naval vessels, such as the *Breslau* and *Goeben*.²³ Such measures would strengthen the state and help encourage the empire's Arabic and Kurdish minorities to assimilate to the dominant Turkish culture.

Parvus envisioned a far different fate for Russia. Russia, unlike the Ottoman Empire, did not require foreign tutelage in order to develop. No foreign power had been able to force the tsar to accept Capitulations. Russia had begun to modernize especially after the emancipation of the serfs in 1861 and later with the industrial development program of Nikolai Burge and Sergei Witte in St. Petersburg, Moscow, and other Russian cities. Russia tried to offset increasing demands by workers and peasants for greater popular participation in the state by engaging in foreign-policy adventures in the Balkans, Caucasus, Central Asia, and the Far East. Parvus had firsthand knowledge from the 1905 revolution that military defeat could radically disrupt the social and political balance of power in Russia, a prospect that he ardently hoped for in 1914: "defeat will bring revolution [to Russia]." 24

The Ottomans, Parvus contended, faced a far more dire prospect if the British won the war: extinction as an independent state. The British were determined to frustrate projects like the Berlin-to-Baghdad railway. Without German financial, military, and technical support the Young Turks simply did not have the strength to resist British attempts to hinder the empire's development. Thus it was far better to support Germany's war against Great Britain in hopes that, with victory, the Ottomans would eventually emerge as a modern and sovereign nation.

It was irrelevant to the empire's ultimate future that the British and their allies had not yet started a war with the Ottomans. The Ottomans needed to enter the war on the German side in order for the Central Powers to have a real chance to win. Parvus also conveniently ignored that Britain was by far the Ottomans' largest trading partner in 1914, with roughly twice the amount of exports and imports as Germany. The economic and social cost of breaking these ties would be felt in the ensuing war years. The limits of German aid can be seen with the Berlin-to-Baghdad project itself. There was not enough money to complete the line by 1914: two large segments were unfinished in the Taurus Mountains, and the railway was still well short of its southern terminal when the war broke out.²⁵

MUSA KAZIM'S JUSTIFICATION FOR JIHAD

Musa Kazım, the former şeyhülislam, seconded Parvus's notion that the Ottomans declare war against the Entente. Great Britain, France, and Russia sought to "eliminate the Islamic caliphate and ruin the entire Muslim world." His greatest disappointments were the policies and actions of London. When the Young Turks first took power in 1908, they had

great hopes. They had appointed pro-British Kıbrıslı Mehmed Kamil Paşa (1833–1913) as grand vezir and viewed the new British ambassador to the Porte, Gerard Lowther (1858–1916), as portending a change in Ottoman-British relations. This relationship had soured at least since 1907, when the British had come to an accord with the Russians, the power most set on expanding into the Balkans and the Caucasus at Ottoman expense. The British were now ready to sacrifice much of the Ottoman Empire in order to maintain Moscow's commitment to pressuring the Germans, the greatest threat to Britain's economic and military predominance.

The British supported Russia's demand for Ottoman "reforms," an action that Musa Kazım decried:

The British [represented by Lowther] did not seriously consider our cordial friendship.... They threatened our independence by loosening our hold on the provinces. They started all sorts of malicious rumors and accusations by propagandists, both outside and inside the country. They spent millions in order to do this, and thus left our constitution without authority. Within four years of such mischief and instigation our peoples hated each other, undermining our country's defense.²⁷

Musa Kazım was referring to London's push for the implementation of provincial autonomy for non-Muslim peoples, a step toward the peaceful partition of the empire. This trend had begun as early as 1861, with the organic statute for Mount Lebanon. After Russia's victory over the sultanate in 1878, the Ottomans were forced to promise provincial autonomy for the Christian Slavs and Greeks of Macedonia and the Armenians of eastern Anatolia.

The British, Musa Kazım contended, had acted through Lowther and his associates to provoke a crisis to accomplish these ends: "They [the British] established the Balkan Union" and made the sultan restore Kamil Paşa's government, which was "convinced that the Ottoman state could only survive under the protection and sovereignty of the Entente." They made Kamil Paşa "dismiss 120,000 teachers and soldiers in the Balkans, and then had the [non-Muslim] governments attack us, occupying all of southeastern Europe until Istanbul." As a result of the onset of the First Balkan War (1912), "Muslim blood poured like rivers." Albania, the Sanjak of Novi Pazar, Thessaly, Western Thrace, and Macedonia—the home province of many of the officers active in the Young Turk government—were irrevocably lost in that conflict. As a result 632,408 Balkan

Muslims died and 812,777 relocated to the Ottoman Empire.²⁹ This was documented by neutral parties, such as the United States, as an ethnically motivated mass slaughter, much akin to genocide.³⁰

Musa Kazım's declaration was aimed in particular at members of the Ottoman army and the surviving refugees who wanted revenge. This is evident from two verses that he cited from the Koran to justify the war:

Oh Muslims! You shall kill the enemies who assaulted your religion, country and expelled you from your home. You shall take the places back. It is sedition that they made you leave your country. Sedition is worse than slaughter.

Oh Muslims! Why do you not wage jihad to rescue the elderly, women, children, and the weak and oppressed who are held captive at the mercy of your enemies?³¹

The lessons were clear. Not only was it legitimate for the Ottomans "to recover their own country from enemy occupation after they were expelled," but they had a religious duty to fight a "holy war" to rescue Muslims who stayed in captivity under the enemies of religion. This was both a "patriotic and humanistic cause." Indeed all able-bodied Muslims were obliged to participate: "Oh Muslims! You shall wage jihad against the enemy with the greatest speed and seriousness by all who can bear arms, both young and old." 32

This justification was critical to Ottoman army conscripts because many were still illiterate peasants and had far more exposure to the mosque than to a school or any other state institution.

Yet Musa Kazım's message was also aimed at provoking Muslim colonial subjects of Great Britain and its allies to rebel. He tried to convince them that it was a religious and moral obligation to revolt so that they would be liberated by the Ottomans, the only Muslim state "to preserve its sovereignty." He targeted Egypt, Persia, Afghanistan, and Morocco in particular, all countries colonized by the British, Russians, and French during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. If they had taken jihad seriously earlier, he maintained, "there is no doubt that none of these states would have lost their independence." 33

Musa Kazım again drew upon the Qur'an to support his arguments:

Oh Muslims! God's way is for you to deny your possessions and expect nothing when waging jihad. You shall not favor captivity and calamity through your greed and abstinence.

Oh Muslims! I obliged you to wage jihad, but you found it disgusting and you acted according to your interests. This is pure wickedness!

Oh believers! What happened when you were told to wage jihad against your enemy, who plotted to kill your religion and country? Why did you not accept this and instead sit in your houses? Were you satisfied with this temporary fleeting life and think it equivalent to eternity? This...life is a small thing in comparison to the blessings of eternity.³⁴

Here Musa Kazım seemed to be speaking directly to those who would be able to read his pamphlet: the literate Muslim elite of foreign colonial states. They were the ones that the foreign authorities would likely appease by granting them limited economic and social privileges. Musa Kazım presumably wanted to persuade them that they were always going to be at a disadvantage, because the European powers often favored local non-Muslims at their expense and exposed them to foreign cultural influences. He no doubt was aware of popular dissatisfaction with colonial rule in these countries. Egyptians protested against the British violently several times at the beginning of the twentieth century (for example, the Dinshaway and Taba incidents of 1906). It was no accident that Abbas Hilmi II, the pro-Ottoman khedive, was deposed at the beginning of the war in favor of direct British rule. Similarly, Persians resented the British and Russian division of their country into spheres of influences after 1907. The British and Russians occupied Persia after the outbreak of war, fearing that the Qajar dynasty would support the Ottomans.

Such a call for global jihad was actually done with German connivance, in particular by the kaiser's spymaster Freiherr Maximilian von Oppenheim (1860–1946), in hopes that it would lead to the British loss of Egypt, Afghanistan, and possibly even India. The famous Dutch Orientalist Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje's allegation in 1915 that "this holy war 'was made in Germany'" reverberated throughout Europe. Many feared that Germany was in fact trying to destabilize all European states that had Muslim colonial populations, including the Netherlands, which feared rebellion among its Indonesian Muslim subjects. Oppenheimer spoke of the necessity of the holy war: "When the Turks invade Egypt, and India is set ablaze with the flames of revolt, only then will England crumble, for England is at her most vulnerable in her colonies." Wilhelm II shared these sentiments: "Our consuls and agents in Turkey and India must

inflame the whole Mohammedan world in wild uprising. For if we are to be bled to death, at least England should lose India." Many scholars of German-Ottoman relations at the outbreak of World War I concur that the Germans were most responsible for the anticolonial holy war.³⁷

This argument remains disputable. As Mustafa Aksakal has written, the Ottomans frequently declared a holy war when they began hostilities with a non-Muslim power: "The [Ottoman] state issued official jihad declarations on at least six occasions [from] 1768 to 1922." It should also be borne in mind that the previous controversial Sultan Abdülhamid II threatened holy war in Egypt, India, and elsewhere as a means to check British, French, and Russian ambitions. These powers sought to limit the Ottomans from spreading dissent, especially during the annual pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina, which they suspected of being a hotbed of anticolonial revolt. Travel restrictions and even quarantine measures were used to limit this danger. The Ottoman declaration of holy war had a similar aim: to weaken their opponents, as a countermeasure to the revolts that the British and their allies no doubt wanted to perpetuate in the Arabian Peninsula, Syria, Iraq, and elsewhere.

Musa Kazım also made sure to give the Ottoman authorities flexibility in how they defined victory in the holy war. He argued that the jihad was limited to fighting only those who were openly hostile:

Oh Muslims! You shall fight God's way against the enemies who dared to slaughter you. But you shall not go too far by attacking the elderly, women, children and those nations who made a treaty with you. God does not like those who go too far!

Oh Muslims!...If...your enemies get scared and ask for peace, there is no need for jihad and you shall agree with them.⁴⁰

These lines seemingly indicate that the Ottomans were willing to stop the war if they were given back lands stolen from them, such as their Balkan and Caucasian provinces, as well as Libya, the Maghreb, and Egypt.

Such qualifications bring into focus once again the overall nature of the Ottoman declaration. Musa Kazım would have had us believe that the Ottomans had a religious necessity to enter the war and that British hostility, as seen in the machinations of Ambassador Lowther, made the conflict virtually inevitable. Lowther certainly was an important factor in souring relations with the Ottomans and no doubt engendered the

hostility of the Young Turks when he subversively acted on behalf of the opposition, such as when he supported the Kamil Paşa regime, the 1909 counterrevolution, and even the 1913 assassination of grand vezir Mahmut Şevket Paşa.⁴¹

Yet Musa Kazım failed to speak about the June 1913 appointment of a new ambassador, Sir Louis Mallet. Mallet was less hostile toward the Young Turks than his immediate predecessor:

I assume that it is to the interest of Great Britain that the integrity of what remains of the Turkish empire be maintained—a division of the Asiatic provinces into spheres of interest would not benefit us, but would seriously affect the balance of power on the Mediterranean, our position in Egypt, in the Persian Gulf, to say nothing of India, and might bring about an European war.⁴²

Mallet would not be willing, however, to entertain an Anglo-Ottoman alliance or to roll back Ottoman territorial losses from the Balkan Wars or beforehand. He foresaw a regeneration of the Ottoman Empire only with the cooperation of the other European powers, including Russia.⁴³

Musa Kazım, a representative of the Young Turks, was painfully aware of the danger of partition by the English and Russians and openly acknowledged this as an imminent threat. But it is also important to remember that he used the declaration of holy war as a justification for retaking previous Ottoman possessions. This argument was very much in line with other parties not directly involved in the June crisis, who sought to cut the most favorable deal with the Entente or the Central Powers. The holy war, it seems, was just a Muslim variation on "sacred egoism."

CELAL NURI'S SKEPTICISM

Celal Nuri seconded Musa Kazım's notion that the holy war was an opportunity for conquest. The Ottomans now had a chance to reverse the continuous loss of territories that had plagued them since Napoleon Bonaparte's conquest of Egypt in 1798: "The recovery of Cairo, the rescue of the Caucasus, and the opening of Asia and Africa will once again give a Muslim [ruler] the right to command. That day others will write about our victory in the book of kings, new Aladdins will appear and work miracles in history, commerce, agriculture, and art." ⁴⁴

In Celal Nuri's eyes, history was ripe for this moment. The British and the French were "in decline," and their cultural successes were accomplished at the expense of their victims:

England and France are the greatest colonial powers, and any of their accomplishments have come at the cost of the material and spiritual well-being of humanity. It is possible to meet eminently knowledgeable French and English in the schools and chemistry laboratories of Paris and London. The French write a graceful literature and are distinguished for their aesthetics. Their language is the most delicate and beautiful. The English are the most free to speak their minds, and their literature and arts do not fall far behind those of the French. Shakespeare, Milton, Newton, Carlyle, and Stevens are English; Courney, Montesquieu, Lamartine, Lavoisier, and Pasteur are French. However, one wonders how they, along with their Russian allies, compare to our own Ottoman literature. England has 375 million prisoners of war; France 50 million; Russia approximately 125 million. In total, this equals half the world's population. How much injustice has been wreaked upon these peoples, suppressing their humanity, extinguishing their talents, and breaking down their self-respect and power? All of these victims have had brilliant pasts, noble goals and laws. Is it possible that a few works of art can erase the sin of this terrible crime? We should not be defeated by appearances.... The French are like wives, and the English are preoccupied with holding onto their property. Consequently, if the earth remains in their hands, civilization will decay and mankind will vanish. 45

The Ottomans and the Germans, by contrast, were upcoming powers, fresh in their military prowess, and less keen about cultural exploitation. Here Celal Nuri cited Ibn Khaldun, the great fourteenth-century historian, "who looked at nations as individuals who go through life in stages, like infancy, youth, adulthood, old age, and death." ⁴⁶ The conquest of peoples was the key stage in a civilization achieving adulthood. This could easily occur, given the non-Western world's thirst for freedom from colonialism.

For the Ottomans, this recalled glorious days in the Islamic past:

When the Islamic sultanate was first established, there was nothing in Medina. There was only determination and courage in the vicinity of the Prophet's bliss. With this sustenance, the first Muslims went as far as the Great Wall of China. Their conquests stretched from the middle of Persia to Vienna and from Moscow to inner Africa. The Ottoman government too began as a Bedouin tribe under Sultans Osman and Orhan. 47

Germany also had a great chance, emerging as a nation in the wake of its victory in the Franco-Prussian War: "Yes! The German genius developed perfectly after Sedan. A repetition after 45 years will lead to even more talents for this young nation." 48

The real challenge for a conquering power, however, was how it would treat its new subjects. Just treatment was prescribed by the Qur'an: "We gave and granted you a clear conquest. God should forgive your past and future sins." Celal Nuri elaborated: "He [the victor] should command in accordance with the knowledge of Islam to promote [not only] the general welfare in politics and society, [but also] the pursuit of knowledge and literature." Mercy was indeed a sacred duty, because acting mercifully toward the vanquished is the way to consolidate power.⁴⁹

Long-lasting civilizations acted according to this precept. Islamic empires from the Prophet Muhammad onward, after taking new peoples under their protection, had always tried to promote education, "religious institutions, the arts, and other important cultural principles." This gave them global reach: "People have come across tribes who have accepted Islam in the remotest parts of Africa, where no European explorer ever could go. Today Muslims are helping African tribes to civilize themselves. This is far different from the Europeans, who simply conquer and exploit." ⁵⁰

Great non-Muslim civilizations worked according to similar principles, in his eyes. Rome had cared for its subjects and developed a cosmopolitan culture had lasted for 1,000 years. The Far East provided an even greater example:

China has reached a stage of civilization that no European has achieved: it has spurned the law that might makes right. Once upon a time, China, like today's Europe, was divided into several governments, regions, and tribes. Unlike the Western world, where war erupted between peoples, a single nation came out of this diversity, and peace and progress infused the Chinese spirit.... There are 15 million subjects of the Islamic Caliphate in China, and the place [of Muslims] is so important in the new republic that they are represented by a green stripe on their flag.... China can continue its work for five more centuries, God willing.⁵¹

To Celal Nuri, China had become a great potential partner: "They could send several million troops to fight England and Russia, as well as establishing a navy with 8 to 14 dreadnoughts." 52

Germany should learn from the Chinese example and respect Islamic civilization:

If the German empire helps the Ottomans with their [military], economy, and politics, Germany will also prosper.... [The kaiser's gifts of] the *Goeben* and *Breslau* were emblematic of this development. We may soon see a confederation of sibling states that stretches from Hamburg to the Indian Ocean. This will be realized in the next few years by a railway from Bremen to Asia that will serve the business of our fellow citizens.⁵³

Yet Celal Nuri then made an unprecedented criticism of the Germans and how they were failing to live up to this vision. He cited an unnamed "powerful Ottoman statesman" who commented negatively on Adolf Marschall von Bieberstein, the long-term German ambassador to the Porte (1897–1912), a central figure in securing German finance for the Berlin-to-Baghdad railway:

Von Bieberstein followed the wrong policy. Marschall had the authority of an emperor in his capital, but he did not help the Ottoman political economy. If he had, Germany would have had a much greater ally today. The Ottomans would not have lost the Balkans, and that would have helped Austria-Hungary. He could have supported the abrogation of the Capitulations but instead pushed for special German privileges [in our empire]. We hope that in the future Germany will not follow such a policy.⁵⁴

Blaming the Germans for the Balkan Wars was bad enough, given the sore feelings of Ottoman patriots after losing the remnants of their European possessions. It is telling that Celal Nuri did not make similar comments about Lowther or other English diplomats for their intrigues during this time, a point that sharply contrasts with Musa Kazım's statements.

But the accusation that the Germans did not support Ottoman efforts to abolish the Capitulations was equally intriguing. Germany, contrary to what Parvus had claimed about helping Ottoman economic development, had refused to support the grand vezir's attempt to raise tariffs in 1913 and gradually eliminate the Capitulations system.⁵⁵ The Germans only reluctantly acceded in August 1914 to the grand vezir's proposal to abolish the system in order to secure the Ottomans' promise

to join the Central Powers as a belligerent.⁵⁶ The Ottomans declared the end of Capitulations the next month.⁵⁷

Celal Nuri was no doubt aware of German authors who wished to turn the Ottoman Empire into a virtual economic colony. Ernst Jäckh, a prominent pamphleteer and the head of the German-Turkish Friendship Society, wrote in 1915 that this interest could be seen in the words of the great scholars of German nationalism. Leopold von Ranke posited that "the future of the German national economy is closely bound to the fate of Constantinople...a virtual paradise with unlimited potential for development." Friedrich List envisioned the commercial future of Germany as stretching from Hamburg to Baghdad. Jäckh and others would conclude that Germany should protect its Middle Eastern interests before "Turkey becomes a Russian province."

Although Celal Nuri admitted the German need for markets, he, like the Young Turk leadership, put a premium on economic development, which ultimately would mean establishing their own industrial base. Thus he warned the kaiser flatly not to abuse his own power: "Germany should not be eager to pursue colonization after its victory, for if it does, it will become like England. Germany's modern weaponry and economy are not sufficient for this task." ⁶⁰

Overall Celal Nuri was profoundly skeptical of the new Ottoman-German alliance. His reproaches against Bieberstein and his fear that Germany might in time morph into yet another imperialist power set on subjugating the sultanate underscore tensions that would only worsen in time. He might have agreed with the assessment of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk at Çanakkale less than a year later: they should not rely on the Germans, "whose hearts and souls are not as engaged as ours are in the defense of our country." ⁶¹

CONCLUSION

As this questioning of the Ottoman-German alliance makes clear, there simply was no consensus about the necessity of war in October 1914—even from committed Young Turks who wished to centralize and even extend their state. Admittedly, some accepted the inevitability of the conflict. Parvus believed that the Ottomans needed German military and financial support in order to survive and that the only chance to ensure this was immediate intervention on behalf of the Central Powers. Similarly, Musa Kazım saw the war as the only way to avoid impending destruction by the British and Russians. These views were no doubt

supported by Enver Paşa and like-minded members of the Ottoman military high command and Unionist elite, embittered by recent defeats to Russia and its Balkan allies.

Yet their justification to go to war had definite holes. British intrigues against the Ottomans had largely ceased after the appointment of Ambassador Mallet in 1913, and German military and economic support was questionable even after the world war had begun. Celal Nuri was quick to pick up on such doubts and went to the extent of accusing the Germans of being no better than the British. He even frankly admitted that their "holy war" was in fact a bold gamble at expansion. He feared that the kaiser was spoiling that chance. Celal Nuri's compatriots, after defeat, would also hold even the Young Turks to account.

NOTES

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- 1. Şeyhülislam Musa Kazım, İslam'da Cihad; Parvus, Umumi Harb Neticelerinden: Almanya Galip Gelirse (hereafter Almanya); idem, Umumi Harb Neticelerinden: İngiltere Galip Gelirse (hereafter İngiltere).
- 2. Musa Kazım, İslam'da Cihad, 17–20; Parvus, İngiltere, 8–16.
- 3. Mustafa Aksakal, The Ottoman Road to War in 1914, 2. Aksakal also based his views on the earlier work of Feroz Ahmad, who posited that the Unionists broadly agreed eventually to join the war in alliance with Germany after the British, French, and Russians rejected a similar pact with the Ottomans. Ahmad added, however, that this consensus was not a rational one, given the Young Turks' need to recover from the Balkan Wars and the possibility that the empire could survive the war as a neutral power.
- 4. Advocates of this interpretation include Gottfried Hagen, "German Heralds of Holy War"; Peter Heine, "C. Snouck Hurgonje versus C. H. Becker"; Sean McMeekin, *The Berlin-Baghdad Express*; and Wolfgang G. Schwanitz, "Germany's Middle East Policy."

- Another important recent study on Ottoman propagandists in World War I is Erol Köroğlu, Ottoman Propaganda and Turkish Identity.
- Parvus, Almanya; Parvus, İngiltere. Key secondary works about Parvus in the Ottoman Empire include M. Asım Karaömerlioğlu, "Helphand-Parvus and His Impact on Turkish Intellectual Life"; Zafer Toprak, Türkiye'de "Milli İktisat," 70, 85, 170–71, 390–92; and Z. A. B. Zeman and W. B. Scharlau, The Merchant of Revolution, 125–44.
- Aksakal mentions that Yusuf Akçura, one of the leading Turkish nationalist ideologues, agreed wholeheartedly with Parvus. Aksakal, *The Ottoman Road to War*, 55–56.
- 8. Musa Kazım, İslam'da Cihad. For recent historical analysis, see Aykut Kansu, Politics in Post-Revolutionary Turkey, 1908–1913, 176, 240, 367; Ferhat Koca, Şeyhülislam Musa Kazım Efendi'nin Hayatı ve Fetvaları, 9–110; and Ferhat Koca, Külliyat, 13–58.
- Celal Nuri, İttihad-i İslam ve Almanya, 12. For further work on Celal Nuri, see Cemal Aydın, The Politics of Anti-Westernism in Asia, 99–104; Recep Duymaz, "Celal Nuri İleri," 242–45; and Christoph Herzog, Geschichte und Ideologie, 88–195.
- 10. Parvus, İngiltere, 27.
- 11. Zeman and Scharlau, The Merchant of Revolution, 38.
- 12. Karaömerlioğlu, "Helphand-Parvus," 146–49.
- 13. Zeman and Scharlau, The Merchant of Revolution, 125–28. The Young Turks were very much sympathetic to such views. Feroz Ahmad has shown that the Young Turks often sought to abolish foreign commercial privileges as early as 1908. Feroz Ahmad, "Ottoman Armed Neutrality and Intervention," 45.
- 14. Parvus, İngiltere, 14.
- 15. Ibid., 10-11.
- 16. Ibid., 11, 8-9.
- 17. Ibid., 23-24.
- 18. Ibid., 31.
- 19. Ibid., 12–13. Here Parvus is referring to the British Merchandise Marks Act of 1887. The law was futile, because British demand for German manufactured goods rose in the years following its promulgation. Maiken Umbach, "The Deutscher Werkbund, Globalization and the Invention of Modern Vernaculars," 120.
- 20. Parvus, *Almanya*, 22-23.
- 21. Parvus, İngiltere, 18.
- 22. Parvus, *Almanya*, 21–22.
- 23. Parvus is alluding to the dispatch of Marshal Otto Liman von Sanders to Istanbul to reform the Ottoman army in December 1913 and the German donation of the two war boats in August 1914.
- 24. Parvus, *Almanya*, 19–20.
- 25. Ulrich Trumpener, Germany and the Ottoman Empire, 1914–1918, 7–11.
- 26. Musa Kazım, İslam'da Cihad, 20.
- 27. Ibid., 18-19.
- 28. Ibid., 19-20.
- 29. Justin McCarthy, Death and Exile, 164.
- 30. George F. Kennan, The Other Balkan Wars.

- 31. Musa Kazım, İslam'da Cihad, 9, 13.
- 32. Ibid., 9, 13, 14.
- 33. Ibid., 16, 11-12.
- 34. Ibid., 12-14.
- 35. Heine, "C. Snouck Hurgonje vs. C. H. Becker," 378-80.
- 36. Oppenheim and Wilhelm II cited in Jonathan Lewis, The First World War.
- Hagen, "German Heralds," 145–48; McMeekin, The Berlin-Baghdad Express, 54–84; Schwanitz, "Germany's Middle East Policy."
- 38. Mustafa Aksakal, "'Holy War Made in Germany'?" 189.
- 39. Birsen Bulmuş, Plague, Quarantines, and Geopolitics in the Ottoman Empire, 152-76.
- 40. Musa Kazım, İslam'da Cihad, 7–8, 10.
- 41. Feroz Ahmad, "Great Britain's Relations with the Young Turks, 1908–1918," 304–21.
- 42. Ibid., 321.
- 43. Ibid., 322.
- 44. Celal Nuri, Almanya, 63-64.
- 45. Ibid., 12–13.
- 46. Ibid., 11.
- 47. Ibid., 60-61.
- 48. Ibid., 14–15.
- 49. Ibid., 53-54, 61-62.
- 50. Celal Nuri, İttihad-i İslam, 197, 207–8.
- 51. Celal Nuri, Almanya, 53.
- 52. Ibid., 53-54.
- 53. Ibid., 34-37.
- 54. Ibid., 24.
- 55. Halil İnalcık, "İmtiyazat," 252.
- 56. Trumpener, Germany and the Ottoman Empire, 28.
- 57. Ahmad, "Ottoman Armed Neutrality," 53.
- 58. Quoted in Ernst Jäckh, *Die deutsch-türkische Waffenbrüderschaft*, 11. Other German advocates of the Ottomans entry on behalf of the Central Powers include Carl Heinrich Becker, *Deutschland und der Islam*; Hubert Grimme, *Islam und Weltkrieg*; and Hugo Grothe, *Deutschland, die Türkei und der Islam*.
- 59. Jäckh, Die deutsch-türkische Waffenbrüderschaft, 11.
- 60. Celal Nuri, Almanya, 24.
- 61. Lewis, The First World War.

"Landscapes of Modernity and Order"

War and Propaganda in Ottoman Writing during World War I

Eyal Ginio

"Our holy warriors (*gazimiz*) in the Caucasus front, who puff out their chests in determination and with huge self-sacrificing vis-à-vis the faces of the hitherto most troublesome front, deserve to perceive this sound of digging work that they can hear while this line [the Ankara-Erzurum railway] is being laid drawing them nearer to the rear, as good news that foresees a victory."

This short quotation appeared in an article that was published in November 1916 in the *Harb Mecmuasi* (War Periodical). The article described the progress made on laying down the railway between Ankara and the eastern front near Erzurum (which had been under Russian occupation since February 1916). The editors of the illustrated *Harb Mecmuasi* dramatized the new railway line connecting Ankara and Erzurum by printing compelling images of men struggling against nature. In this manner they displayed the ability of Ottoman engineers and workers to overcome the austerities of a harsh environment. By bringing selective scenes from the military front to people's homes, the *Harb Mecmuasi* was fulfilling a very clear mission: to demonstrate the Ottoman army's capacity to win the war and, in consequence, to garner wide public support for the war effort.

The visual and textual coverage of the Ankara-Erzurum line exemplifies the use of the changing landscape in Ottoman propaganda during World War I. This chapter aims to explore the uses and images of landscape by the *Harb Mecmuasi* as means to claim modernity and superior technological capacity during the war. It presents reports and images of the Caucasus front and eastern Anatolia to explore their role in diffusing

propaganda in support of the Ottoman claims: first, to have transformed itself into a modern power, well equipped with technology and know-how; and second, to be part of what was perceived at the time as the coveted exclusive club of civilized and modernized nations.

Unlike its allies and main foes, the Ottoman army did not have a central agency that dealt with propaganda.² But the Ottoman authorities did invest in an array of events and products that were designed to convey clear political and ideological messages. The declaration of jihad (holy war in the name of Islam) at the beginning of the war (November 11, 1914) is clearly the most prominent and studied example of the Ottomans' use of ideology to promote their pan-Islamic agenda during World War I. The proclamation of jihad could offer the Ottomans a unique advantage that would make them attractive in the eyes of potential allies.³ Indeed Michael Reynolds mentions that one of the incentives behind Germany's offer of military alliance with the Ottoman Empire was the assumption that the Ottoman caliph could "awaken the fanaticism of Islam' to spark rebellions against British and Russian rule in India, Egypt, and the Caucasus."

In many of the studies that discuss Ottoman participation in World War I, the Ottoman call for a holy war against their Christian adversaries exemplified the distinctly non-European character of the empire as demonstrated by its use of religion and so-called religious bigotry to gain political and military advantages. Probably indifferent about the use of Christian images and symbolism in the West during the war,⁵ scholars perceived the Ottoman jihad as another example of Ottoman otherness (and failure). Very tellingly, Ottoman propaganda during World War I is rarely discussed in volumes that are dedicated to the social and cultural histories of European societies during the war.

But the declaration of jihad and the use of pan-Islamic sentiments were not the only Ottoman propaganda tools and messages used during World War I. Erol Köroğlu's study on Turkish literary work during the war and its role in diffusing propaganda highlights the contribution and failures of the Turkish-speaking nationalist intelligentsia in promoting the cause of the war through their writings. Notwithstanding their weak propaganda performance, at least during the first two years of the war, those writers, journalists, and poets, often paid by state ministries, were able to use the war itself to concentrate on the gradual shaping of national ideologies (Ottomanism, Islamism, Westernism, Turkism or often some combination), the very thing upon which any propaganda effort depended.⁶

Köroğlu also explores the role of the press as an important tool for spreading propaganda during the war. He emphasizes the unique contribution of the *Harb Mecmuası* to the shaping of Ottoman propaganda during World War I, especially in diffusing images of Ottoman greatness and abilities. According to him, "the *Harp Mecmuası* became the most important and successful [tool] of Ottoman visual propaganda."

The net effect of the periodical's propaganda is hard to assess, as no statistics on its readership are available. Neither do we have any information regarding the reception of the periodical's messages among its potential educated audiences. It is unfortunately impossible to ascertain to what extent its patriotic messages trickled down to the masses, if at all. I would argue, however, that many Turkish-speaking publicists, writers, and poets of prominence, representing the cultural elite, lent their pens to the periodical, therefore indicating its significance as a major tool for mobilizing civilians and soldiers alike. A closer examination of the writing and images that appeared in the *Harb Mecmuasi* gives a better idea of the official propaganda that evolved during World War I in the Ottoman Empire.

OTTOMAN PROPAGANDA AND THE HARB MECMUASI

In the Ottoman Empire, as in the other combatant nations, World War I marked the beginning of modern propaganda. For the Ottomans, however, printed propaganda was rather modest in its aims and scope, probably due to a low literacy rate. The wish to be free of reliance on the foreign military press was proclaimed in 1915 as the main reason for establishing the *Harb Mecmuasi*. The previous Balkan Wars formed the background for the decision to publish the first Ottoman military magazine. The incompetence (or rather deficiency) of the Ottoman military press during these conflicts reflected the general Ottoman ineptitude, according to the editors in the first issue of their magazine.

The Ottoman General Staff Headquarters Intelligence Office apparently stood behind the publication of the *Harb Mecmuasi*. The editors' names did not appear on the masthead. But among the various writers who contributed articles and poems to the magazine are the leading intellectuals of the period, many of whom were identified with promoting Turkish nationalism. Thus, for example, Ahmet Ağaoğlu (Aghayev, 1869–1939), an Azerbaijani émigré and one of the founders of the Turkist association Türk Yurdu (1911), published several articles in the *Harb Mecmuasi*. One of them appeared under the title "The Salvation of Turkey and the Islamic World." In this article Ağaoğlu praised the military

alliance with Germany and Austro-Hungary against Russia and Britain. For him, the war would bring about a brighter future for Turkey and for the Islamic world.¹¹ In another issue of the *Harb Mecmuasi* the poet (and jurist) Midhat Cemal (Kuntay, 1885–1956) printed his poem "Çanakkaleden Kaçanlara" (For Those Who Fled Çanakkale), in which he mocked the English and French soldiers for their defeat in Gallipoli ("your soldiers are experts in running away").¹² The popular historian Ahmed Refik (Altınay, 1881–1937) examined the conquest of Egypt by Selim I (r. 1512–20) to demonstrate that in the past Ottoman soldiers had been able to cross the desert to conquer Egypt. Fully cognizant of the place that the Ottoman sultans of the past held in the Ottoman collective memory, Ahmed Refik sought to instill hope in his readers in a time when contemporary Ottoman units were about to launch a second military expedition against the British garrison in the Suez Canal through the Sinai Desert.¹³

The *Harb Mecmuasi* appeared regularly once a month between November 1915 and June 1918, thus covering most of World War I. The journal was designed specifically for a wartime audience. It was chock full of photographs of mobilization, political and military leaders (starting from the top: the incumbent sultan and the monarchs of the allied empires, Ottoman generals, and the rank-and-file), war machineries, and the various fronts. Unsurprisingly, the *Harb Mecmuasi* made the military its principal focus of attention. Its twenty-seven issues had a clear mission: to echo the reversal of fortunes on the battlefield. This new periodical would announce to the whole world the Ottomans' victories and military achievements during the first year of the current war, a clear reference to Gallipoli. Its reporters would point out the rejuvenation and revolution that had occurred in the nation. While the language of the periodical was exclusively Turkish, it included reports and images of other ethnic groups inhabiting the Ottoman lands, especially the Arabs.

The *Harb Mecmuasi* served as one of the few Ottoman periodicals to diffuse their messages during the war. As such it endeavored to bolster its readers' loyalty, confidence, and motivation to fight for the Ottoman state. New images were required to instill a sense of confidence following the calamitous defeats of the Balkan Wars. One of this periodical's major tools was the frequent use of images representing the various fronts in eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus, Iraq, Galicia, the Balkans, Palestine, and Sinai, thus indicating the growing importance of photography for the representation of wartime efforts and achievements. The numerous reports from the fronts, commentaries, battle-cry poetry, short

stories, and illustrations expressed an unswerving recognition of Ottoman achievements, heroism, and the virtues of the Ottoman soldiers and civilians. The *Harb Mecmuasi* assigned a specific role to photographers (of whose identities we know very little). They were required not only to document wartime action but also to record technological achievements, historical and architectural monuments in the combat zones, and the everyday lives of soldiers.¹⁵

While the periodical included detailed reports regarding the battles that took place on various fronts, it dedicated a significant part of its coverage to acquainting readers with the various areas in which the fighting occurred. Images played a major role in this introduction to far-away provinces. The rapid development of technology in the mid-nineteenth century took photography out of the studio into the landscape.¹⁶ Generally speaking, photography played a major role in World War I propaganda of all belligerent parties and was seen as the ultimate means of capturing reality. Ian Whyte demonstrates the significance of diffusing images of industrial and imperial landscapes in the promotion of national identity and the demonstration of modernity in nineteenth-century Britain. Ideologies and discourses of nationalism were constructed through the manipulation of depictions of landscape or the sacred symbols of nationalism embedded in landscape.¹⁷ Whyte claims that collections of photographs of the idealized English countryside became particularly popular during World War I for patriotic reasons. Their main role was to symbolize what the troops in the trenches were supposedly fighting for.¹⁸ It seems that the major aim of using landscape in Ottoman propaganda was different: to convince soldiers and civilians of the technological and military capabilities of the Ottoman army.

The *Harb Mecmuasi* dedicated large portions of its coverage to showing what can be described as "symbolic imagery" of harsh and virgin landscapes, on the one hand, and advanced technology, modernity, and the conquest of nature, on the other hand. The periodical's reports and photographs described hostile frontier lands that required special efforts and skills from the nation to overcome their harsh conditions. The periodical presented images of landscapes and peoples of the frontier lands alongside such technological "wonders" as railroads and tunnels as well as more recent emblems of progress such as airplanes that could capture the rapt attention of civilians. ¹⁹ Indeed combating and subduing mighty nature itself (and not only the enemy) and the use of technology played an important role in glorifying the Ottoman army, its leaders, and their vision of modernity. In this way the laying of a railway track in the desert or

in the rugged mountains of Anatolia was also a propaganda tool, used to emphasize the greatness and the achievements of the Ottoman Empire.

In an era in which the greatness of nations was measured by their access to technology and their ability to control nature, images of construction and advanced technology functioned to articulate narratives of national identity and modernity. The needs of the war meant that many resources were put at the disposal of the army to enable the construction of an infrastructure that would serve it. Such projects transformed the landscape, especially in the front-line provinces, after a long period of neglect. In a state with underdeveloped transportation and communication systems this transformation was seen as a major pool for symbols and heroes that could be used for propaganda. Through viewing these photographs the spectator-reader was brought to the front, like a visitor.

Denis Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels maintain that "a landscape is a cultural image, a pictorial way of representing, structuring or symbolizing the surroundings."20 Indeed the photographs included in the Harb Mecmuasi reflected cultural assumptions and political aspirations. Many of the images that appeared in the Harb Mecmuasi were borrowed from the European colonial imaginary and context, as shown below. The embracing of modernity and the rejuvenation of the nation were the core messages of Ottoman propaganda as it appeared in the Harb Mecmuasi. Unlike the previous Balkan Wars, in which the main discourse revolved around the notion of the Ottoman nation as a diversified yet united community sharing national goals and ideals,²¹ during World War I the emphasis shifted to herald the rebirth of the Ottoman Empire as a nation that could cope well with the challenges of modernity and external European aggression. The Ottoman nation continued to be represented as the main community. But its members were clearly the Turks and the Arabs. Other Muslims (like the Kurds) and the non-Muslims were overwhelmingly absent from most of the images and stories appearing in the Harb Mecmuasi.

FIGHTING THE ENEMY: EASTERN ANATOLIA AND THE CAUCASUS FRONT

Before the empire's official entry into the war, the Ottoman leadership and its German allies already envisioned the Caucasus as one of the possible fronts in which the Ottoman army might concentrate its efforts and contemplated the risks and the advantages of launching an offensive there against Russia. ²² Shortly after the Ottoman Empire entered the war

on the side of the Central Powers, it was evident that the Ottomans had ambitions in the Russian Caucasus. In November 1914 Ottoman units moved into eastern Anatolia, with one group advancing on Batum (Batumi) and the other operating around Kars. In January 1915, soon after beginning the offensive on Sarıkamış in eastern Anatolia, Ottoman units entered Tabriz and Urmia in Iranian Azerbaijan in an effort to encourage rebellion among the Muslims of northern Iran and the Caucasus, to stir problems in the Russian rear, to encircle the Russian armies and, perhaps, to capture Baku with its oil fields.²³

The Ottomans' disastrous defeat at Sarıkamış in January 1915, however, forced them to give up on this ambitious plan and to retreat in the harsh conditions of winter. The years 1915 and 1916 were a time of defeat for the Ottoman armies in the Caucasus and eastern Anatolia. The Russian Caucasus Army took advantage of its victories in the winter offensive at the beginning of 1916 and captured Erzurum, often seen as the key to the control of the Anatolian plateau (February 1916), and then advanced deeper into Anatolia, as far as Erzincan (July 1916).

The 1917 revolution in Russia and the subsequent disintegration of Russian military power on the various fronts brought about a reversal in the Ottomans' fortunes in eastern Anatolia and later in the Caucasus as well. The severe winter of 1916-17 and the Ottoman armies' need to rebuild their power following two years of continuous and brutal combat meant that no major changes occurred in 1917.²⁵ Only later, in early 1918, did the Ottoman Empire seize the opportunity to fill the resulting political and military vacuum in the Caucasus to recapture the areas occupied by the Russian army earlier in the course of the war and to recover the provinces of Ardahan, Kars, and Batum, the three strategic eastern provinces ceded to Russia under the Treaty of Berlin in 1878, a demand that was sanctioned by the Brest-Litovsk Treaty (March 1918). The Ottoman army was soon operating in the Caucasus. By June 1918 the Ottomans had regained in eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus not only the 1914 Russo-Ottoman frontier but also the pre-Berlin frontier of 1878. The agreement concluded between the Ottoman Empire and the newly established government of short-lived independent Azerbaijan enabled Ottoman troops to move into Azerbaijani territory to fight against Russian Bolsheviks and the Armenians who still controlled Baku. On September 14, 1918, the combined Ottoman-Azerbaijani army captured Baku on behalf of the Azerbaijani government. Less than two months after the entry of Ottoman troops into Baku, World War I officially ended. The Ottoman army had to withdraw from northwest Persia, Baku, Batum, and the rest

of Transcaucasia under the stipulations of the Mudros Armistice (November 1918).²⁶

The military changes in the Caucasus were reflected in the *Harb Mecmuasi* and in its mode of coverage of the events taking place on the front. The *Harb Mecmuasi* spoke of the war as a necessary process, the price to pay for achieving the rejuvenation of the Ottoman Empire. It celebrated heroism, sacrifice, and technological ability as the highest virtues worthy of emulation. Referring to the Caucasus front, the periodical declared that "the glory of our soldiers who protect the different fronts of the Ottoman fatherland and sacrifice themselves while attacking the enemy's lands is a fruitful lesson of virtue to be told to future generations. The distinguished character of a nation manifests itself only during great times and during great events."²⁷

The military significance of the Caucasus front gave it a major role in the war narratives that the *Harb Mecmuasi* published. The editor chose to present the eastern front through several recurring images: the construction of the Ankara-Erzurum railway line; Ottoman officers and soldiers who fell in battle serving their fatherland; photographs of Ottoman civilians, including women, as active participants in the war effort; Russian prisoners of war; the Ottoman ski-troops deployed at the frontline; and the liberated cities and localities after the Russian retreat in 1917 and 1918. All of these images promoted and validated claims of modernity, order, civilian contribution in the war effort, and victory. The images were often juxtaposed against the harsh landscape of the Caucasus front.

The ongoing war was presented by the *Harb Mecmuasi* as a time of resolve, sacrifice, and virtues. It was also an opportunity, as it could rejuvenate the nation by replacing old perceptions and technologies with modern skills and abilities. Such a claim appeared in an editorial entitled "Eternal Hero" ("Ebedî Kahraman"). The author claimed that

this nation [millet] actually did need a war. However, it was not for the sake of gaining new lands or of sacrificing people, which it found redundant. [The] need to go to war was just so the nation would learn to believe in itself. [Otherwise] nothing could have been useful to us—not even Çanakkale, Iraq, or the defense of the holy Caucasus. Now that we are confident, we know that the whole world believes in us and that we ourselves believe in us.²⁸

The war was thus identified as a key instrument of social and national change that would create new possibilities, displacing the old ones.

RECONSTRUCTING THE NATION THROUGH TECHNOLOGY AND WAR: THE ANKARA-ERZURUM RAILWAY

The Ankara-Erzurum railway line appeared several times in the *Harb Mecmuasi*. Images of newly laid tracks in the Negev and Sinai deserts played a similar role. This choice was not unintended. In nineteenth-century Europe the train was a symbol of progress and modernity, a leading product iconic of the industrial age.²⁹ The 1840s were a time of railroad fever in the Western world, and most of all in Britain. Railroad visionaries dreamed of "covering the whole earth with their iron rails and puffing clattering trains." The construction of railways brought changes to warfare. From the middle of the nineteenth century railroads began to have a significant impact on military strategy.³¹

For many in Europe railroads were more than tracks and trains; they were a new way of life, the forerunners of a new civilization.³² In the colonial context the train was even more symbolic.³³ The laying of tracks enabled the colonial powers to reach remote areas, to establish control, and to spread commerce. It also served the colonial discourse regarding the ability, and obligation, of the colonial powers to bring civilization to those "uncivilized" lands. It was likewise a means of conquest, through which the technological supremacy of the colonial powers over nature was clearly manifested. Building the railroad system in India became the most monumental project of the colonial era.³⁴

The construction of railways became a major icon used both by artists and by government agents wishing to promote their agendas. Michael Freeman examines the railway as a cultural metaphor in his study of railways and the Victorian imagination. He maintains that one of the most common subjects for railway prints (so popular in mid-nineteenth-century England) was detailed depiction of the civil engineering railway work. Not only the skew bridges attracted artists but the entire spectrum of viaducts, cuttings, embankments, and tunnel entrances. These images were a reminder of the onward march of technology and the triumph of humans over the natural order. The pictures of railway construction created an image of the reliance on human mental and muscle power and of an assiduous and disciplined workforce. Photography came to be the dominant medium for recording and advertising the railway.³⁵

Trains came late to the Ottoman state. Foreign investment and technical know-how were decisive in introducing the Ottoman lands to the railway age. The first railway line, a stretch of track between İzmir

and Aydın, was inaugurated in 1858 by a private British company. Later construction of railways in the Ottoman state was mostly limited to the Ottoman provinces in the Balkans, connected to the European railway network. Anatolia and the Arab provinces received only marginal interest from European entrepreneurs who took part in the gradually expanding network of rail construction in the Ottoman lands. 36 At the outbreak of World War I eastern Anatolia contained no railways at all. Much of this lack of infrastructure resulted from Russian pressure on other European powers to refrain from constructing railway lines in this sensitive border area. Indeed the Young Turk government attempted from at least September 1909 to persuade the American Chester syndicate to build railways in central and eastern Anatolia, the "forbidden zone" from a Russian perspective. Ignoring Russian protests, in June 1911 the Chester concession was purchased by the French Régie Général des Chemins de Fer, with a draft agreement drawn up for concessions on lines in eastern Anatolia. Until the outbreak of World War I Russian officials did their best to gain some control over the construction of a railway line in eastern Anatolia, thus minimizing its military threat to Russian interests.³⁷

On the eve of World War I almost all railways in the Ottoman lands were privately owned and operated by foreign concessionaries. The construction of the Hijaz railway line with Ottoman and Muslim capital and largely by Ottoman labor was a major exception that indeed served as a major tool of propaganda, including reinforcement of a pan-Islamic agenda, during the Hamidian period.³⁸ Notwithstanding the significance of the Hijaz railroad, the Ottoman authorities were late to grasp the military potential of railways for the transfer of troops and provisions.³⁹ The lack of an extensive railway network was one of the causes for the Ottoman defeat during the Balkan Wars (1912–13). This lack of infrastructure damaged the ability of the Ottoman army to move soldiers to the front effectively.

The lessons from the Balkan Wars were understood. With the outbreak of World War I the Ottoman military authorities allocated high priority to the construction of railways, depending upon their capacity to transport, equip, and maintain large numbers of troops in arid lands far from bases of supply. Such construction projects drew the attention of the *Harb Mecmuasi*. The editors chose the title "The Significance of the Railway in Time of War" for a report that appeared in its May 1916 issue. As in many other cases the periodical employed Germany and the German army to present the ultimate use of technology to serve military aims, to demonstrate the existing gap between German technological capacities

contrasted with current modest Ottoman performances that were about to be dramatically upgraded, and to instill in its readers the vision of future Ottoman progress. According to the author of the article, the trains enabled the German army to move soldiers from one front to the other and therefore were crucial for achieving both defensive and offensive military missions. Unfortunately, the report stated apologetically, the Ottoman army could not make use of the railway on the Caucasus front due to the lack of appropriate infrastructure. Therefore the Ottoman army remained dependant on the use of camels, ox-carts, and pack animals to send weapons and provisions to the eastern front. This neglect was about to be remedied, however: a railway was under construction. Ottoman engineers and workers of the new generation were challenging nature by their daring and skills. This short report juxtaposed images of camel caravans bringing provisions to the Caucasus front with images showing engineers working on the railway line east of Ankara. For the Harb Mecmuasi the Ottoman engineers were a model of the new generation of Ottomans, who were skillful and adept at modern technology. 40 The conclusion was clear: only war enabled these technological revolutions.

To accomplish military aims the Ottoman military authorities initiated the construction of new railways and roads in Anatolia, Palestine, and Sinai during the course of the war, to serve the army's needs. The attention given to railway construction during the war was accompanied by other improvements to the Ottoman communications infrastructure. The construction work on the Ankara-Erzurum line in 1916 (mentioned above) should be seen as part of the Ottoman attempt to improve transportation to the front, a need that became even more acute following the Russian conquest of Trabzon (April 1916). The harbor of Trabzon served as a main logistics center for the Ottoman Third Army, which held the front in eastern Anatolia. Its conquest by the Russians severed the maritime connection between Istanbul and the Caucasus front. The service of the Caucasus front.

But the construction of the Ankara-Erzurum line also served as propaganda. Keith Watenpaugh claims that for the Ottoman empire, "as a modernizing state, the deployment of new technologies had great symbolic importance." ⁴³ He further notes that the notion of Ottoman backwardness and the hierarchy of civilized nations employed the metaphorical language of class and emulation. This assumption prevailed in the post-1908 press and in the rhetoric of voluntary organizations—many of which were related to the war effort. Moreover, it constituted a coherent body of thought and a self-composed coming-of-age narrative for the urban middle class. ⁴⁴

Therefore the construction of railways for military purposes also contributed to the Ottoman discourse of progress and modernity. One major feature of this advocated rejuvenation was manifested in the periodical in the innovative use of technology by the Ottomans to construct infrastructure. Indeed the new ability of Ottoman technology to overcome environmental problems was presented as an achievement that could be clearly linked to the war's demands. The construction of railways in eastern Anatolia was displayed as an Ottoman modernist project with technology triumphing over the harsh landscape. The *Harb Mecmuasi* chose to publish three images of the laying of the Ankara-Erzurum line in its issue of November 1916, only four months after the Ottoman defeat at Erzincan and the farthest advance of the Russian army into Anatolia.⁴⁵

One of these images presented the railway cutting through a steep hill, while another provided a close look at the construction of small bridges needed for the railway line. A proud engineer and the working team stood next to these bridges, which were still under construction. A third image displayed the construction of wood suspenders built in preparation for the erection of a vault on which bridges could be laid. The engineers (dressed in Western garments) and the workers (dressed in traditional clothes) stood proudly in the construction site. ⁴⁶ The construction of the Ankara-Erzurum railway was completed only two decades later under the Republic. It is interesting to note that the beginning of service on the line was celebrated by the Turkish postal services, which issued a series of stamps in October 1939 that displayed the railway line and its technological achievement. ⁴⁷

COMBATING NATURE: ENDURING THE WINTER'S HARSHNESS ON THE CAUCASUS FRONT

The reference to mighty nature and its challenges to humans' ability to survive was the key factor in the *Harb Mecmuasi*'s coverage of the Caucasus front, especially following the gradual retreat of the Russian army after the 1917 revolution and the subsequent return of the Ottoman army to eastern Anatolia and its ensuing penetration into the Caucasus. The masculine endurance of the Ottoman soldier, who was more and more defined as "Turkish" in the periodical, in the face of mighty nature was presented as a source of inspiration for the whole nation. Thus, for example, the writer Ekrem Vecdet scorned those who looked to the West and its infinite deceptions for inspiration and rejuvenation, which he identified with youth and modernity. Standing in front of the mighty

Caucasus, he exclaimed that the richest sources of inspiration (*defne-yi ilham*) could be found in the Caucasus and its powerful and abundant natural features.⁴⁸

A major extreme condition that characterized the eastern front was the harsh cold prevailing during the winter months. In its March 1917 issue the *Harb Mecmuasi* published extracts from a diary written by an Ottoman officer serving on the Caucasus front. The entry dated January 26, 1915, reflects his melancholic thoughts and amazement at the strength of the nature surrounding him and his awe at the achievements of Ottoman Turks during the sixteenth century in overcoming these natural impediments: "What a painful day. The snow is falling over the hills while creating whirlwinds in the valleys. At times it covers the entire horizon. The surroundings remain covered in freezing and lethal darkness. The rage of men is united here with the fury of nature." The *Harb Mecmuasi* presented the ability of Ottoman soldiers to overcome nature's hardships in these harsh conditions.

Unsurprisingly, the Ottoman soldiers' ability to cope with the rugged landscapes of the Caucasus appeared in the *Harb Mecmuasi* in parallel with the political and military disintegration in Russia and the understanding that Ottoman fortunes on this front could be reversed. The *Harb Mecmuasi* attributed this possible alteration in the war's direction not to the internal collapse of Russia but to the rejuvenation of the Ottoman Empire. The image of the well-equipped and disciplined ski-troops (*kizakçi*) represented this change. We can assume that this recurring image of the *kizakçi* in the periodical's pages was meant to obliterate the previous image of the poorly clothed Ottoman soldiers who had frozen to death due to lack of equipment during the calamitous defeat at Sarıkamış three years earlier, at the beginning of 1915.

The *Harb Mecmuasi* chose to publish several photographs of skitroops marching with their guide dogs in the deep snow, inspecting the snowy landscapes, lying buried in the snow behind machine guns in wait for the enemy troops, climbing rugged and steep cliffs, engaging in team sports, and resting in the foreground of snowy and mountainous landscapes. The picture on the front page of the December 1917 issue, for example, depicted a group of six ski-troops standing proudly on their skis "while floating in the dangerous sea of snow," as the caption claimed.⁵⁰ Other images showed sledges (*kızak*) carrying provisions to the front. The message was clear: Ottoman soldiers could not only cope with the harsh conditions prevailing in the deserts of Sinai but could likewise fight

in the snowy landscape of eastern Anatolia. In both cases their ability to use modern technology and equipment allowed them to conduct effective warfare against their enemies.

The image of the well-equipped soldier coping with the challenges of nature to face his Russian enemy became one of the major symbols representing the Caucasus front in the Harb Mecmuasi. But the Ottoman soldier was not alone in this mission to serve his country in this harsh landscape. The image of "our self-sacrificing women" (fedakâr kadınlarımız) indicated the mobilization of the entire nation in the war effort in the Caucasus. One image shows two women clad in white, standing in a snowy landscape and carrying provisions on ox-carts to the frontline.⁵¹ The message was clear: Ottoman men and women confronted nature together in the service of the nation. Their designated roles on the frontline were different, however: women were expected to engage in auxiliary activities that did not fall outside the usual frame of socially acceptable female behavior, such as nursing or assisting the men in fulfilling their missions at the front. The images printed in the Harb Mecmuasi conveyed these messages that women should serve the nation through voluntary work.52

CONCLUSIONS

The Harb Mecmuasi was one of the main Ottoman propaganda tools used to paint a positive picture of the empire's position and capacities during World War I. In these years of great turmoil and yet hope the periodical's main contribution to Ottoman propaganda consisted of its ample use of reports and images taken from the different fronts. The selected images and reports produced at the front incorporated all the elements needed for a discourse on the rejuvenation of society and the claim of modernity for the Ottoman state and nation. These images and texts displayed intensive construction and industrialization. These were portrayed, first, as a means to build the nation's economic and military bases. Second, they reflect a belief in the transformative power of technology (and war) to promote progress that would enable the Ottoman Empire to become a modern state, a full member of the exclusive club of the "civilized" European empires, of which Germany served as the main model. Indeed the journal endeavored to strike the imagination of readers and to invoke in them pride in the nation on the basis of its proclaimed military capacities and achievements.

In this light it is clear why the editors of the *Harb Mecmuasi* selected images of railway construction and photographs of well-disciplined and well-equipped ski-troops. Each of these operated as one element of a broader project for diffusing an image of modernity and technological skills and capacities. Photography shaped the *Harb Mecmuasi*'s narratives of modernization and brought the Caucasus front line to light for the purpose of propaganda. The photos documented progress by showing harsh landscapes mastered by railroads, technology, and human sacrifices.

The periodical's coverage of the warfare taking place in eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus reflected the ups and downs in the Ottoman performances on this front. By claiming an Ottoman share in this exclusive club of "civilized" and advanced societies, as manifested by the laying of the Ankara-Erzurum line, the editors of the Harb Mecmuasi sought to persuade their readers in 1915 and 1916 that the Ottoman army was indeed on its way to gaining military victory—despite obvious evidence to the contrary. After the Bolshevik revolution and the ensuing evacuation of the Russian armies from eastern Anatolia, the images from the liberated areas were meant to instill hope among the exhausted Ottomans. Images depicting "the recovery of beloved Batum" (istirdad edilen sevgili Batum) adorned the last issue of Harb Mecmuasi, which appeared in June 1918. Other images showed Ottoman units marching along the rough paths leading to mountainous Artvin and the Ottoman legacy of liberated Kars. 53 After the recapture of the provinces of Batum, Kars, and Ardahan at the beginning of 1918 the Harb Mecmuasi praised the Ottoman army for its virtues (fezail) and determination to bring order and security to this region that had been devastated by the Bolsheviks' atrocities (mezalim). Furthermore, it claimed, "the Ottoman army of the twentieth century merits all our admiration and congratulation for its good fortune in returning these historical cities with their old Ottoman heritage that were under Russian occupation for decades to the abode of the fatherland."54 The editors probably hoped that the diffusion of images and news regarding the Ottoman achievements in the Caucasus could stir enthusiasm and faith in a time when defeat on the other fronts and the harsh conditions of civilians in Istanbul and elsewhere became more and more ominous.

NOTES

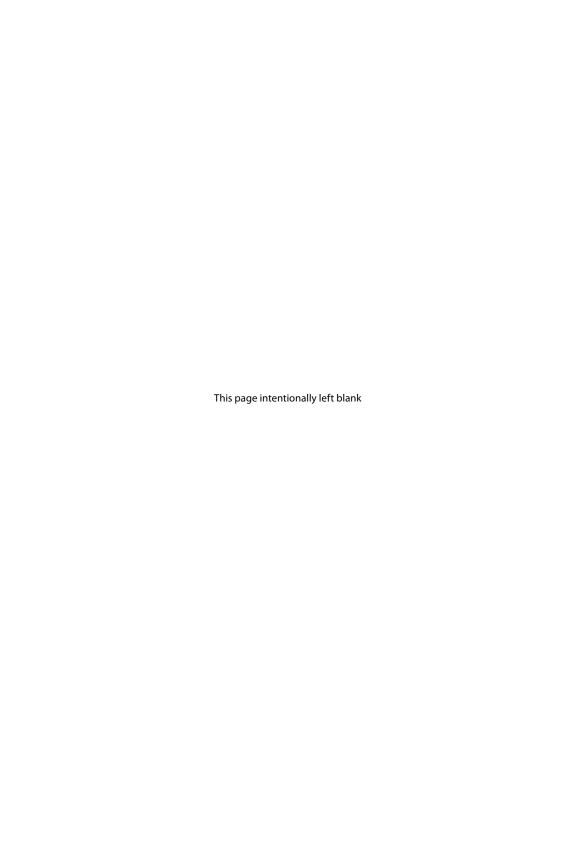
- 1. "Ankara-Erzurum Hattı," Harb Mecmuası, Teşrin-i Sani 1332 (November 1916).
- 2. For a discussion of the use of propaganda by different European countries during

- World War I, see Aviel Roshwald and Richard Stites, eds., European Culture in the Great War.
- On the Ottoman use of jihad in World War I, see Jacob M. Landau, The Politics of Pan-Islam, 94–141.
- 4. Michael A. Reynolds, *Shattering Empires*, 120. See also Mustafa Aksakal, "'Holy War Made in Germany?"
- On the use of Christian symbolism by the European powers during World War I, see Stefan Goebel, The Great War and Medieval Memory.
- 6. Erol Köroğlu, Ottoman Propaganda and Turkish Identity.
- 7. Ibid., 79-82 (quotation on 80). In addition to the press, other visual products (like postcards and postage stamps) were used to promote the Ottoman cause. Other venues of spreading propaganda, such as public holidays, gatherings, and subscriptions also were used to popularize the war and its aims.
- Compare, for example, Leonard V. Smith, Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau, and Annette Becker, France and the Great War, 1914–1918, 53–68.
- 9. "Harb Mecmuası niçin Çıkıyor?" Harb Mecmuası, Teşrin-i Sani 1331 (November 1915).
- 10. Köroğlu, Ottoman Propaganda, 79-80.
- 11. Ahmet Ağaoğlu, "Türkiye'nin ve İslâm Âleminin Kurtuluşu," Harb Mecmuası, Teşrin-i Sani 1331 (November 1915). On Ahmet Ağaoğlu, see A. Holly Shissler, Between Two Empires. On his contribution to the debate on Turkish nationalism, see also Kemal H. Karpat, The Politicization of Islam, 377–78.
- 12. Midhat Cemal (Kuntay), "Çanakkaleden Kaçanlara," *Harb Mecmuası*, Şubat 1331 (February 1916).
- 13. Ahmed Refik, "Kahira Yollarında," Harb Mecmuası, Şubat 1331 (February 1916).
- "Harb Mecmuası niçin Çıkıyor?" Harb Mecmuası, Teşrin-i Sani 1331 (November 1915).
- 15. Eyal Ginio, "Presenting the Desert to the Ottomans during World War I"; Köroğlu, *Ottoman Propaganda*.
- 16. Ian D. Whyte, Landscape and History since 1500.
- 17. Ibid., 172-81.
- Denis Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels, "Introduction," in Denis Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels, eds., The Iconography of Landscape, 1.
- 19. On the place given to aviation in the popular imagination during World War I, see John H. Morrow, "Knights of the Sky," 305–24. On the depiction of pilots and airplanes in the *Harb Mecmuasi*, see, for example, a report on the wartime everyday routine of Ottoman pilots stationed in northern Iraq near the Iranian border: "Irak'ta Tayyarecilin [sic] Hayatı," *Harb Mecmuasi*, Mayıs 1334 (May 1918).
- 20. Cosgrove and Daniels, "Introduction," 1.
- 21. On the uses of Ottomanism during the Balkan Wars, see Eyal Ginio, "Mobilizing the Ottoman Nation during the Balkan Wars (1912–1913)."
- 22. Mustafa Aksakal, The Ottoman Road to War in 1914, 148, 156, 175.
- 23. Reynolds, *Shattering Empires*, 124–27.
- 24. Shissler, Between Two Empires, 161.
- 25. Edward J. Erickson, Ordered to Die, 160-61.
- 26. Bülent Gökay, A Clash of Empires, 9-38.

- 27. "Kafkas Cephesi Menakıbından," Harb Mecmuası, Nisan 1333 (April 1917).
- 28. "Ebedî Kahraman," Harb Mecmuası, Ağustos 1332 (August 1916).
- 29. Whyte, *Landscape and History*, 13–18.
- 30. Michael Freeman, Railways and the Victorian Imagination.
- Stephen Badsey, "The Impact of Communications and the Media on the Art of War since 1815," 69-70.
- 32. Daniel Headrick, The Tools of Empire, 187.
- 33. Ruth Ginio, French Colonialism Unmasked, 69-76.
- 34. Headrick, The Tools of Empire, 181.
- 35. Freeman, Railways and the Victorian Imagination, 230–35.
- 36. Donald Quataert, "The Age of Reforms, 1812–1914," 804–15.
- 37. Alan Bodger, "Russia and the End of the Ottoman Empire," 90–92.
- 38. Jacob M. Landau, *The Hejaz Railway and the Muslim Pilgrimage*; William Ochsenwald, *The Hijaz Railroad*.
- Michael E. Bonine, "The Introduction of Railroads in the Eastern Mediterranean," 60–63.
- 40. "Harbında Demir Yolu'nun Ehemmiyeti," Harb Mecmuası, Mayıs 1332 (May 1916).
- 41. Ochsenwald, *The Hijaz Railroad*, 142–47.
- 42. Reynolds, Shattering Empires, 136.
- 43. Keith David Watenpaugh, Being Modern in the Middle East, 199.
- 44. Ibid., 87.
- 45. "Ankara-Erzurum Hattı," Harb Mecmuası, Teşrin-i Sani 1332 (November 1916). See additional pictures of the line's construction: "Ankara-Erzurum Askerî Demir Yolunda," Harb Mecmuası, Teşrin-i Evvel 1332 (October 1916); "Ankara-Erzurum Demir Yolunda İnşaatı İkmal Edilen bir Tünel," Harb Mecmuası, Şubat 1332 (February 1917).
- 46. "Ankara-Erzurum Hattı," *Harb Mecmuası*, Teşrin-i Sani 1332 (November 1916).
- 47. "Opening of the Sivas to Erzurum Link of the Ankara–Erzurum Railway," set of four stamps, http://www.enricophil.it/Railway/Europe/rw tur sto12 X.htm.
- 48. See, for example, Ekrem Vecdet, "Kafkas İlhamları," *Harb Mecmuası*, Mayıs 1334 (May 1918).
- 49. "Kafkas'ta Cephesinde: Bir Zâbitin Defter-i Hâtırâtından," *Harb Mecmuası*, Mart 1333 (March 1917).
- 50. "Kafkas Cephesinde Kızakçı Bölük Efradımız: Tehlikeli Kar Denizinde Yüzerlerken," *Harb Mecmuası*, Kanûn-1 Evvel 1333 (December 1917). See also "Kafkas Harb Cephesine Dair," *Harb Mecmuası*, Ağustos 1332 (August 1916).
- 51. "Kafkas Yollarında Fedakâr Kadınlarımız," *Harb Mecmuası*, Mayıs 1334 (May 1918). See also "Kafkas'ta Cephesinde: Kadınlarımız Sırtlarında Cephe-yi Harba Erzak Taşıyor," *Harb Mecmuası*, Kanûn-1 Evvel 1333 (December 1917).
- 52. For similar representations of women's voluntary work in British propaganda during World War I, see Angela Smith, "'The Girl behind the Man behind the Gun."
- 53. Harb Mecmuasi, Haziran 1334 (June 1918).
- 54. "Kafkasya'da Osmanlı Ordusu," Mayıs 1334 (May 1918).

PART III

The War and the Ottoman Home Front



Greeks, Jews, and Armenians

A Comparative Analysis of Non-Muslim Communities and Nascent Nationalisms in the Late Ottoman Empire through World War I

Pamela Dorn Sezgin

The purpose of this chapter is not to settle the debate regarding the suffering of the Ottoman Christian populations during World War I. Rather, it seeks to provide insight into the complex, multilayered texture of late Ottoman society and the events concerning Greeks, Jews, and Armenians in the century before World War I, a context for the events occurring during the Great War. A different paradigm for interpreting the experiences of non-Muslims during the war emerges from employing the methodologies of postmodern ethnography as well as documentary evidence. It should be noted that Greeks, Jews, and Armenians were not the only non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire. These groups are analyzed specifically because of their relationships to nationalist movements. In the cases of the Greeks and the Armenians, factions within their communities pursued political secession from the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Jewish community, in contrast, lacked separatist aspirations and maintained its loyalty to the Ottoman state.

In the West the perception of non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire too often has been limited to the victimization of these groups, with a focus on forced migrations and massacres. This perception was colored by World War I era propaganda. British historians like Arnold Toynbee were in the service of the British War Office's propaganda bureau, Wellington House, during and immediately after the Great War. As both Justin McCarthy and the late Stanford Shaw have demonstrated, these studies were heavily influenced by missionary reports and propaganda

that sought to demonize the Ottomans into the "terrible Turk" stereotype. In World War I the Ottomans were the enemy of the British. The Ottomans, allied with Germany and Austria-Hungary, opposed the Entente. The stereotype became pervasive after World War I and was most dramatically played out in a novel, Franz Werfel's *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh*, a story set in 1915 (although published in 1933), which received a great deal of press. It promoted a stereotype, however, that was not shared by all former Ottoman subjects.

MY GRANDFATHER'S PARADISE

The elderly immigrants to the United States, for example, who had been refugees of population exchanges and deportations from the former Ottoman Empire in the period of World War I and its aftermath, painted a different picture. They spoke of the multiethnic nature of their former homeland in their memoirs, oral histories, and "culture-at-a-distance" fieldwork studies that I conducted between 1976 and 1980.² Participants in these studies in Atlanta, Cincinnati, Miami, and Indianapolis were Levantinos (Italian Catholics), Armenians, Greeks, Sephardic Jews, and Syrian-Lebanese who came to the United States during the population upheavals of the 1910s through 1926 or later in the 1950s and 1960s, fleeing political revolutions in Syria, Egypt, and Iraq. They shopped at the same Armenian and Syrian-Lebanese groceries, buying feta cheese, olives, grape leaves, bulgar wheat, and olive oil. They listened to the same 78 rpm recordings of Hafiz Burhan (1897-1943), Dalgas (Andonios Diamandis, 1892–1945), and Haim Efendi (1853–1937). Indeed many of the performers and ensembles on these recordings made in New York, Chicago, and Constantinople in the 1910s through the 1940s were multiethnic and sang in numerous languages.3

The congregants of the Greek Orthodox churches, the Syrian-Lebanese Melkite and Maronite Catholic churches, and the Sephardic synagogues in these American cities attended each other's ethnic festivals, recognizing a shared culture. The elders told stories of an amazing cosmopolitan lifestyle experienced in their youth in Alexandria, Beirut, the Island of Rhodes, Salonika (Thessaloniki), Manastır (Monastir/Bitola), Smyrna (İzmir), and Constantinople (Istanbul). Perhaps because they were ethnically and religiously different from the surrounding southern U.S. population that at times had been hostile to them, these intercultural interactions among former Ottoman immigrants were cordial. In fact, these elders taught me my first words of Ottoman Turkish and acknowledged a shared Ottoman past over cups of Turkish coffee. They sang the

same songs, often translated into their own languages.⁵ They proudly showed me their "Turkish" carpets, well-worn connections to the ancestors and a tangible demonstration of cultural heritage. They danced the same dances. For example, in Indianapolis, Indiana, a pan-Macedonian dance event each year included Greek, Bulgarian, and Jewish immigrant families. They cooked using shared culinary traditions but with different spices. And they told the same Nasreddin Hoca stories with minor variations (for example, the Jews called him "Joha").⁶

Their memories were nostalgic despite the tragedies of war and the population removals. This attitude presents a stark contrast to the recent politicization of the role of the Ottoman Empire in World War I by contemporary Armenian and Greek ethnopolitical organizations that interpret every event as evidence of genocide. In the late 1970s through the 1980s Turkish diplomats who were too young to have any involvement in World War I were assassinated in California and Europe, as if they were somehow responsible for these tragedies. And in the twenty-first century this subject has become the subject of continual legislative debate in the United States Congress and an issue during the French presidential election campaign in 2012. Even an obscure Argentian city, Córdoba, has weighed in on the matter. Scholars have investigated it too, and a review of recent literature appears in *Middle East Critique*.

WORLD WAR I AS SOCIAL REVOLUTION

Steven Sabol, editor of the journal *First World War Studies*, likened the Great War to a paradigm shift in Thomas Kuhn's *Scientific Revolutions*. World War I represented widespread social upheaval; new technologies of war designed to increase causalties; and the failure of old aristocratic rule, diplomacy, and state institutions. The Great War caused average people, diplomats, politicans, and scholars to reconsider the meaning and impact of war and to restructure the very basic social institutions within their nation-states. The social revolutions ignited by this war led to the downfall of several empires and to widespread questioning of imperialism and forever changed the status of women and minorities in many societies. All of these patterns played out in the Ottoman Empire.

By 1914 the Ottoman state was no longer run as an absolutist monarchy and was in its Second Constitutional era, led by the Unionists. Leaders of the Committee on Union and Progress (İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti; henceforth Unionists or the CUP) decided, after exploring the available options, that the best opportunity for preserving the Ottoman state involved having one of the Great Powers as a sponsor and that only

military might could ensure its future.¹¹ The experiences in the Balkan Wars had brought home that second idea, as did the contradictory nature of British and French diplomacy, which continually looked at the Ottoman Empire as a buffer to limit the Russian Empire's expansion but at the same time eyed the Middle Eastern territory under Ottoman rule as potential imperial acquisitions for Britain and France. This position was untenable for the Ottoman state, as was its increasing debt to European banks and to the foreign corporations that were bringing mechanized agriculture, industry, manufactured goods, and other accouterments of modern development into the empire. These corporations were getting tax breaks (the Capitulations) and were seriously damaging the Ottomans' control of their own economy, which was increasingly in foreign hands.¹² Since 1881 a large part of the Ottoman state's budget had been going directly to European banks and companies via the Ottoman Public Debt Administration (Düyun-u Umumiye-i Osmaniye Varidat-i Muhassasa İdaresi).13

Non-Muslims in the empire in some cases were benefiting from this foreign economic intervention because they tended to be polyglots and served as interpreters. The rising middle class in these communities became the culture broker between the Ottoman state, on the one hand, and the foreign companies and their embassies, on the other. Historically, this was a traditional role for Greeks. The Mavrocordatos family for several generations served as translators (dragomans) in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, interpreting and negotiating between foreign diplomats and the Ottoman government. The position of dragoman was often a stepping-stone into a princely position (*hospodar* or *voyvoda*) as the Ottoman local ruler in Wallachia or Moldavia.

By the 1910s some minority business leaders were in positions of power with the new foreign-backed industries taking hold in the empire, like the Armenian philanthropist and art collector Calouste Sarkis Gulbenkian, an oil entrepreneur, who established the Ottoman Turkish Petroleum Company (which later became British Petroleum when the British took it over on the eve of the world war). Gulbenkian (1869–1955) became fabulously wealthy and was known as "Mr. Five Percent," because of the shares he was awarded from each transaction. Petroleum, of course, fueled military vehicles important in the war effort.¹⁶

Other prominent Armenians were well enconsced in the Ottoman system. For example, the Abdullah Brothers, an Armenian family who used the French version of their name, Abdullah Frères, for their company, were the official Ottoman court photographers. They took pictures of Ottoman landscapes and monuments as well as portraits of the royal

family, government officials, and prominent Muslim and non-Muslim notables. They even photographed the American writer Mark Twain.¹⁷

Most of the rank and file in the Ottoman non-Muslim communities were not as wealthy as the Gulbenkians and the Abdullahs. Non-Muslims composed the vast majority of small business owners and employees in the merchant class at the time of World War I, as they had for centuries. Non-Muslims were employed in various trades, as artisans making rugs, shoes, ceramics, and metalwork and as workers in the tanneries of big cities and in the silk workshops of Bursa. Armenians were famous as jewelers. Jews were gold dealers (sarraf) and textile merchants. Greeks and Armenians in rural areas engaged in raising animals. Greeks were also skilled at commercial fishing. The modern Turkish names of many fish are Greek-derived, such as levrek (levreki), barbunya (barbunyas), and karides (karides). Jews before 1920 were agricultural brokers, buyers of food stuffs throughout Anatolia and elsewhere who arranged transport for farm products to markets both within the empire and abroad. 18 Jews were also well known in some areas like Yanya (Janina or Ioannina) and Thrace as dealers in dairy products, buying milk from farmers and running cheese and yogurt stores.19

The upper classes in these communities saw their sons trained as professionals: bankers, lawyers, doctors, architects, and engineers. The Balyan family is one of the most famous Armenian families, having served as architects for the many rococo structures in Istanbul, including mosques. Dewish architects and engineers were prominent. Elias Modiano in Salonika designed the modern municipal market, and the Halfon family built the historic *çarşı* (market) in Çanakkale (Dardanelles). Banking was dominated by Armenians and Greeks. Historically, non-Muslim physicians had served the Ottoman court for centuries. During World War I Christian and Jewish doctors served in many units of the Ottoman army, throughout the conflict. This included Armenian doctors, who were not removed from service despite the revolutionary activities of other members of their ethnic group elsewhere in Anatolia. Description of the conflict.

MODERNITY, NON-MUSLIMS, AND THE OTTOMAN STATE

The Ottoman Empire was not some archaic relic, oblivious to change. The elites, first in the monarchy and later the Unionists, struggled thoughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to reform and modernize their state. Centralization was a key to this plan, as was adapting an overarching legal code that would encompass the various

religiously based legal systems already in place. The Ottoman Empire experimented with legal reforms in much the same ways that the Austro-Hungarian Empire did and in roughly the same time frame. Sultan Abdülaziz I granted all permanent residents of his empire civil rights in 1869, including non-Muslims, who now had legal parity with Muslims. In the Austro-Hungarian Empire rights were made independent of religious affiliation in 1848. By 1867 Jews as non-Christians had full civil rights.²²

The 1860s were a time of participatory change in the Greek, Jewish, and Armenian communities. Each of these recognized millets was allowed to set up its own governance structures for appointing religious leaders: different patriarchs for the respective Christian groups and the *hahambaşı* (chief rabbi) for the Jews. Community leaders were also allowed to select members of a *laik* (secular council) that would oversee Christian or Jewish schools, hospitals, and charitable activities such as the administration of orphanages and relief funds for the poor.

In his study of the Armenian Constitution of 1863 (Nizâmnâme-i Millet-i Ermeniyân) Vartan Artinian details the internal communal struggles among factions of the Armenian millet about these issues.²³ Unlike the Greeks, whose patriarch held a great deal of centralized control, the Armenian community was internally diverse and factionalized. A sectarian split divided Armenians who were Orthodox (known as the Apostolic or Gregorian Church) and those who practiced the Latin (Catholic) rite. Some Armenians had been converted to Protestantism by foreign missionaries.

The Ottoman Armenian community was divided by geography and class distinctions. The leadership recognized by the Ottoman state was composed of elite Armenians from Istanbul. According to their constitution, these elites were responsible for designating representatives for the Armenians scattered throughout Anatolia and elsewhere, such as from the Balkans before 1912 and in the Levant. Armenians were also divided by class. The Armenian *amiras* (the economically powerful class of Armenian bankers, business leaders, high-level bureaucrats, and other influential families, mostly based in Istanbul) were the most elite and wealthy. They were responsible for paying the salaries of the church officials as well as endowing charitable activities. The rising bourgeoisie, the Armenian small merchants and artisan guilds (*esnaf*), also demanded their own representation. The debate within the community was heated but eventually was resolved and incorporated into the legal apparatus of the Ottoman state and the 1876 constitution.

In civil law Greeks, Jews, and Armenians could settle their legal disputes in their own court systems, under their respective religious laws,

if they so desired. These disputes included nonpayment of rent to landlords, litigation related to business dealings, divorce, adoption, and related issues. Sometimes, though, the non-Muslims would use the *kadi* courts in Istanbul, especially if the disputes involved members of different faith communities.²⁴ The kadi courts used Shari^ca, the traditional Islamic religious legal system. In the 1860s, however, a modern secular legal code began to take shape in the Ottoman Empire.

One aspect of this new legal code was criminal law. The new laws, the Islâhat Fermânı Hatt-1 Hümayûn-û, developed by Mehmed Emin Ali Paşa (1815–71), an advocate of reform under Abdülmecid and Abdülaziz, were translated into the languages of non-Muslims living in the empire. For example, for the Jews, the code was published in both Ottoman (Osmanlıca) and Ladino. Rabbi Dr. Isaac Jerusalmi found a copy of this code from 1860 in Cincinnati, Ohio, in the Price Hill synagogue, a congregation started by Thracian Jews who immigrated to the United States in the aftermath of the Balkan Wars.²⁵ Chapter 1 of the code deals with offenses against the state, such as forgery, breach of the public trust, and offenses involving public officials. Chapter 2 lists the laws and punishments for homicide, property damage, and offenses against the person. Chapter 3 deals with laws relating to the public health and police regulations. This document illustrates that the Ottoman state was concerned with having the populace, including the non-Muslims, familiarize themselves with the legal changes that were taking place. Non-Muslims were included in this endeavor to a great degree: the new laws were even published in their own languages.

Finally, non-Muslims were included in service to the Ottoman state. With the awarding of civil rights, they became eligible to work as bureaucrats in the Ottoman system. Eventually they also were required to do military service; they had previously paid a tax that exempted them.²⁶ The Sephardic Jews, who were the majority in the Jewish communities in Anatolia and the Balkans, had a folk narrative about their agreement to do this service. This narrative was recounted by Abraham Galanté at least five times in his collected works and also appears in the memoirs of other Ottoman Jews.²⁷ Galanté framed the narrative by first explaining the history of some of the Tanzimat laws that applied to both Muslims and non-Muslims. For example, when the *haraç* (a tax paid by non-Muslims for each adult male) was abolished in 1855, the idea of having both Muslims and non-Muslims serve in the same military units with equal opportunities "for promotion to the grade of colonel was abandoned even before encountering any difficulty. Instead, non-Muslims were allowed to serve as physicians and pharmacists in these units." This was in place

until 1900, when a meeting between the grand rabbi and Sultan Abdülhamid II took place according to the following folk narrative recounted by Galanté:

One spring afternoon, the temporary [*locum-tenens*] Grand Rabbi Moshé Lévi was eating his lunch at noon, when an aide-de-camp of the Sultan Abdülhamid came via a caïque to the grand rabbi's residence in Ortaköy [a neighborhood on the Bosphorus in Istanbul]. The aide was carrying a letter from the first secretary of the palace. The letter stated that the sultan wanted to see the rabbi that same afternoon and that the rabbi should bring someone with him who knew the Turkish language well to serve as interpreter. The rabbi's assistant was ill, so he took his grandson. And they left by caïque with the sultan's aide-de-camp.

When they arrived, they were received by the Sultan Abdülhamid [II], who asked about the rabbi's health and expressed satisfaction that the Jews were so very loyal. He asked the rabbi if the Jews were ready to offer new service to the state. The rabbi replied that he awaited His Majesty's orders and that in all of their religious books the Jews obeyed the laws of the countries in which they were residing, just as if they were religious laws, *dina demal-houta dina* [a Talmudic expression in Aramaic meaning "The law of the state is the law"].

Abdülhamid was satisfied with the rabbi's response and got to the substance of the visit: "I know that the Jews are persecuted in the different countries and that a great number want asylum. I consent voluntarily to accept the Russian Jews and others who want to come to Turkey. My intention is to settle these immigrants in a part of eastern Anatolia where, with the indigenous Jews, they will be able to constitute a force of 100,000 men that will be attached to the 4th Army. [Galanté adds in a footnote that the Fourth Army was a special force against tsarist Russia based in Erzurum.] If the question of kosher or *treyfah* [nonkosher] is a problem for soldiers of the Jewish faith, then I will install a kosher kitchen. What do you say, *hahambaşi* [grand rabbi]?²⁹

Galanté finished the narrative with the grand rabbi thanking Abdülhamid for this great honor and explaining that a council of seventeen rabbis was necessary to sign the edict into law. Galanté added that the sultan, for his part, was touched by the loyalty and attachment of the Jews to their country. But for a number of reasons the act was never implemented. In another section of the same volume Galanté reproduces the law in its original language, Ottoman Turkish, and adds a footnote explaining that he learned the story from the grandson of the grand rabbi mentioned in the narrative.³⁰

This narrative illuminates several important ideas about the place of Jews in Ottoman society. First, it gives an indication regarding the peculiar situation of language use. While Jewish schools in the late nineteenth century taught Ottoman Turkish as part of their curriculum, many older people in the non-Muslim communities, particularly the religious leaders, had difficulty with the official language of the state. Unlike the polyglot business leaders, the religious officials lived in their own communities and mostly used the Jewish languages: Judeo-Spanish for daily conversation until it was replaced by French, a higher-status language; and Hebrew, Aramaic, and Ladino, the published calque of their Spanish, for religious purposes. The paradox was that these religious leaders were also legally recognized agents of the state as the regional heads of their millet: if they were not fluent in the Ottoman language, they had to have an assistant who was. Hence the advice of the aide-de-camp in the previous narrative, to "bring someone who knows Turkish well to translate," is both humorous and apt.

Second, the idea that Abdülhamid II would know the initimate details of Jewish dietary practices (*kashrut*) and would offer to establish a kosher kitchen for the Jewish soldiers seems a bit farfetched but might be plausible. Some Jews were in service to the *saray* (palace, imperial court). The issue regarding food practices may have been known, but probably not at the level of the *padishah* (emperor). This discussion is a device in the folk narrative that gives us an insight into the close relationship and strong emotional connections that the Jews had to the Ottoman state. Having Abdülhamid demonstrate an intimate knowledge of Jewish dietary requirements is a folkloric inversion. The Jews felt an intimate connection to the saray, so they thought that the emperor must have had a similar and reciprocal feeling and knowledge about their culture.

The intimate connection to the saray was not just an emotion or wishful thinking. It was tangibly demonstrated not only by the Jewish musicians and entertainers in the court but by Christian functionaries serving there as well. For example, this connection can most clearly be seen in music. In Ottoman Jewish culture the most serious musical material was the sung religious poetry brought to the Ottoman Empire from Muslim Spain: the *maftirim*, a kind of hymn singing (Hebrew: *pizmonim*),

paralleled the Turkish Sufi *ilâhi*. Both of these musical religious traditions, non-Muslim and Muslim, were based upon the Classical Turkish (Klâsik Türk) music of the Ottoman court. Rabbis, dervishes, and Christian religious cantors often served both at the court and in their respective communities.³¹

Finally, the punchline in Galanté's narrative is the idea of a force of 100,000 Jewish soldiers, composed of both indigenous Ottoman Jews and Russian Jewish immigrants, who would serve on the Ottoman-Russian border in the Fourth Army. This Ottoman Jewish Army did not materialize, but Jewish battalions existed in the Ottoman Army during the Balkan Wars (1912–13) and in World War I (1914–18). A famous one from Salonika took part in the 1908 Young Turk Revolution, marching to Istanbul. This Jewish battalion even had its own song in the Judeo-Spanish language:

Mansevos de los kazales i Munchos de Salonik Noz izimos volontarios Nos fuimos al askerlik O la Libertad se va azer Nuestra sangre va korrer Por amor de la Turkia

Turkos, djudios i kristianos Todos otomanos mos tomimos De las manos djurimos De ser ermanos Para Estambol vamos A partir kon los malos vamos A kombatir para salvar a la Turkia

[Young men from the towns and Many from Salonika We volunteered We went to the army Oh! The liberty that's going to happen Our blood is going to run For the love of Türkiye Turks, Jews, and Christians All Ottomans, we take Our hands (hand-in-hand) Swearing to be brothers Let's go to Istanbul Let's leave the evil ones Let's fight to save Türkiye]³²

Actually, the idea of resettling the Russian Jews among the indigenous Jews in eastern Anatolia was viable. In his meetings with Theodore Herzl, the founder of Zionism, Abdülhamid II was not keen on settling large numbers of foreign Jews in Palestine, but he did offer to provide sanctuary in eastern Anatolia or in small settlements throughout the empire. Indeed many Jews fleeing pograms in the Russian Empire in the late nineteenth century found asylum in the Ottoman Empire.³³

Non-Muslims became further integrated into the state not only by serving in the military or in the state bureaucracy but also via the Ottoman constitution and parliament of 1876-78. They were allowed representation through a new type of participatory governance system. Demographics in the Ottoman Empire were complex. Muslim elites dominated political life, and non-elite Muslims were numerous in many (but not all) regions of the empire. The designation "Muslim" included an internal diversity in terms of subdivisions into language and ethnic groups (Albanians, Arabs, and Kurds, among others). But even these designations (such as Kurds) contained at least four different languages and differences in lifestyles based upon ecological adaptations: mountain Kurds versus those who lived in the valleys, and tribal pastoralists versus those who were settled. They even had religious differences, such as non-Muslim Kurds, the Yazidis, who practiced a religion related to Zoroastrianism. To complicate matters, many Muslim Kurds and Christian Armenian families in eastern Anatolia were intermarried. Marriage was a way to forge alliances between families in a patrilineal, patriarchical system of local governance, which existed to a surprising degree independently of the central government in the eastern Anatolian hinterland, far from the Ottoman capital in Istanbul.³⁴ Yemen was another borderland at the margins of the Ottoman Empire, where traditional family networks and tribal social organization challenged Ottoman attempts at centralization.³⁵

Non-Muslims in some areas constituted a plurality. For example, Greeks in towns and cities along the Aegean coast dominated the cultural and economic life. Although Jews were not a majority in Salonika before 1912, when that city became part of the modern Greece they constituted a plurality in the political, social, cultural, and economic life. Jews made up at least one-third of Salonika's population and dominated business. The port was closed on Saturdays out of respect for the Jewish sabbath, and even non-Jews (Christians and Muslims) knew at least a few phrases in the Judeo-Spanish language.³⁶

Due to this ethnographic complexity, the notion of plurality is more useful to understand the demographic and political dynamics than the simple duality of majority versus minority. Plurality is reflected in the late Ottoman censuses, where the modernizing late Ottoman government recognized that some type of apportionment was needed to ensure a diversity of representation. As Kemal Karpat noted, "The Porte assigned a number of deputies to each province and the governor informally apportioned this number among Muslims and non-Muslims. The provincial councils which already had mixed religious representation elected the deputies." Thus, of the 119 deputies elected, 4 were Jews, 44 were Christians, and 71 were Muslims, with each deputy representing the adult male population broken down into 18,750 Jews, 107,557 Christians, and 133,376 Muslims.³⁷ Linguistic groups were also represented in this parliament, with the Muslim delegation further subdivided into Arabic, Albanian, Turkish, Bosnian, and Kurdish speakers and the Christians into Greek, Armenian, Arabic, and Bulgarian speakers.

NASCENT NATIONALISMS AND THE OTTOMAN STATE

The reforms of the nineteenth century were designed both to modernize the empire and to keep foreign intervention from the European powers at bay. The rationale was that happy non-Muslims would not complain to the British, French, and Russian ambassadors. But the new legal system was not enough to contain the growing national movements among the various Christian populations, particularly in the Balkans. These nationalist movements were being fostered by external interests, particularly by the Entente as a way of further weakening the Ottoman Empire. The European powers desired Ottoman territory, particularly strategic areas. The Straits were a focus. The Russian Empire had long had designs on the waterway, which was of equal interest to the British.³⁸

The Greek National Movement was an early success story in the nineteenth century with the 1821–30 Independence War. The Greeks in the Morea (the Peloponnesus) had the support of British, French, and

Bavarian backers. Of course Greek ideologues of the revolution had studied in imperial Russia. The Russian-Greek relationship was established by the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca (1774), which ended the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768–74. One of its provisions stipulated that the Russian Empire would be the guarantor of Orthodox Christian rights and well-being in the Ottoman Empire.³⁹ Some nineteenth-century Greek revolutionaries served in the Russian Imperial Cavalry during the Napoleonic Wars, like Alexandros Ypsilantis (1792–1828). Ypsilantis was from a Phanariot family whose immediate ancestors had served as Ottoman princes (voyvodas) in Romania. He was a leader of the secret organization that planned the Greek War of Independence, the Filiki Eteria (Society of Friends). Theodoros Kolokotronis (1770–1843) was from more humble origins, leading the klephtes (irregular forces of brigands) during the Greek Independence War. He received his military training both with the Russian fleet in the Russo-Ottoman War of 1806–12 and with the British on Zakynthos, then a British possession, in an earlier conflict against the French. 40

Greek independence from the Ottoman Empire was not supported by all Greeks. Although some Phanariot families (like the Ypsilantis family) were leaders of the revolt, other Phanariots opposed it. The Phanariots came from Fener, the district above the Golden Horn where the Greek patriarch was headquartered. They were the descendants of elite Byzantine families, many of whom welcomed Fatih Mehmet (Mehmet the Conqueror) in 1453 due to a dispute with the Byzantine emperor. They served for centuries in Ottoman service at the Porte and had vast business and real estate holdings. For these families Greek independence was an outlandish, romantic idea. They did not want to upset the status quo, because they were benefiting from their alliances with the Ottoman state. 41

Alexis Alexandris wrote that the ecumenical patriarch (the patriarch in Istanbul) was opposed to secular Balkan nationalisms: "the existence of an independent Greek state produced a cleavage in the fabric of the Orthodox Christian *millet* since it gave to ethnicity and language higher priority than religion." ⁴² The term "ecumenical patriarch" means that his standing is beyond national borders, that the church itself supersedes nationalities. The formation of Balkan nation-states in the nineteenth century was problematic for the patriarch based in Istanbul (Constantinople at the time). Until then he actually had served as the only patriarch for most of the Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire, Greeks as well as non-Greeks. As the new millets were being formed in the 1860s, the patriarch began to lose power. The Bulgarian situation was especially

worrisome: an exarch was recognized by the Porte, and the Bulgarian church separated from Fener.⁴³

Even in the aftermath of World War I (1918–23) some Phanariot families resisted the pressure to abandon the Ottomans. During the occupation by British and French forces and the subsequent Greek military exploits of the Megali Idea, these families stayed aloof, keeping a low profile and preferring not to be involved in the conflict. The Megali Idea was an attempt by the modern Greek state to annex territory from the Anatolian peninsula, including Constantinople (Istanbul) and Smyrna (İzmir), in the immediate aftermath of World War I, a plan that had the backing of the British. It became a catastrophe when the Greeks were defeated by Turkish forces who were intent on winning their own War of Independence. At Lausanne (1923), when the wars were finally at an end and yet another treaty was being negotiated, the Greeks of Constantinople/ Istanbul were exempted from the population exchanges and the patriarchate, although stripped of much of its power, was allowed to remain in that city.⁴⁴

Of course, the Greek Independence War in the early nineteenth century had an impact on Greeks formerly in service to the Porte. Foreign diplomatic relations broke down in the 1820s, according to Christine M. Philliou, with no new appointments of Greek translators. Tonce the conflict was settled, Greek Hellenes (citizens of the new Greek state) returned to do business and even reside in the Ottoman Greek communities, where they were included in communal Orthodox decision making. There was really no practical division between the two elements in the Contantinopolitan Greek community until 1964.

Jewish nationalism was not a factor for the Ottoman Jews in the late nineteenth century or at the time of World War I. It became more important for them after the war. The Zionist movement for a Jewish nation-state had been started by Theodore Herzl, who was from Austria. Herzl had visited Abdülhamid II several times in Istanbul, but nothing substantial came of the meetings. This was probably because the leaders of the empire did not want to give up territory, especially in the late nineteenth century, when many forces (both internal in terms of Christian nationalists and external in terms of the Great Powers) had designs on dismembering the Ottoman Empire. Abdülhamid had allowed Russian Jewish refugees to settle in his empire, as noted, but not exclusively in one area. The Ottoman policy was to integrate non-Muslims as well as the Muslim refugees from the Balkans and the Caucasus into the existing population, rather than to concentrate them in any one place.⁴⁸

Ottoman Jews knew about Zionism and debated it in their press. But, like the pro-Ottoman faction of Greeks, they remained aloof and did not publicly support separation from the empire. Ottoman Jews residing in Palestine were in contact with the Yishuv, the foreign Jews who came to establish a state. ⁴⁹ Some Ottoman Jews in Istanbul and Salonika also had contact with the Zionists, but they kept this relationship quiet. Politics in the Ottoman Jewish world was marked by the principle of *kayades* (Judeo-Spanish: quietness or unobtrusiveness). The overwhelming majority of Ottoman Jews were concerned with making a living, and their business lives were bound to the traditional Ottoman economic system. ⁵⁰ Overt support for outside interests and extreme political views did not mesh well with such commercial interests.

The relationship between Zionism and the Ottoman Jews was complex, contradictory, and somewhat hidden due to the role of Ashkenazic (European) Jews as the early historians of Zionism: they who tell the story tell their own story. The Sephardic (Ottoman) experience with Zionism is a new area for research today. Recent books by Yuval Ben-Bassat and Eyal Ginio, Michelle Campos, and Abigail Jacobson add to earlier analyses of the Zionism-Ottoman relationship that can be found in the articles by Esther Benbassa, Feroz Ahmad, and İlber Ortaylı. 51

Ottoman Jews saw Palestine as another area of the empire in which they could reside, do business, or pursue religious studies. They were already a transregional community. Their Mediterranean family and commercial networks spanned centuries, continents, and cities. Traveling to the Levant to do business or for religious reasons seemed a natural part of their normal life. Indeed the Ottoman Jews, Greeks, and Armenians all had transregional networks and were settled throughout the Balkans, the Middle East, North Africa, and Anatolia. Yona Sabar remembered the stories of his father and uncles who traveled from Zahko, a small town in what is now northern Iraq, to Anatolian and Syrian cities pursuing their trade.⁵² Erol Haker also documented his ancestors' travels from their home in Kırklareli to neighboring regions in Thrace in pursuit of business and the changes after the Balkan Wars when the Bulgarian border was closed to them.⁵³ Sebouh David Aslanian discussed Armenian networks.⁵⁴ As Reşat Kasaba noted, the Ottoman Empire was a "moveable empire" before its centralization as a modern state at the end of the nineteenth century. Many groups of peoples moved freely within its large territories.⁵⁵ That motion all came to an end with World War I and its aftermath. The twentieth century regulated the former Ottoman area into nation-states with impermeable boundaries.

Many Ottoman Jews in the nineteenth century and early twentieth century seemed to have no compelling reason to separate from the Ottoman Empire and pursue a nationalist agenda. Indeed many factors argued against the strategy of nationhood at that point, based on the upheaval created by their Christian neighbors. This attitude was reflected by the grand rabbi, Haim Nahum Efendi (1872–1960). Rabbi Haim Nahum was closely allied with the Young Turk movement and considered himself a progressive. He was an advocate of educating Jewish youth in a modern, secular fashion and supported the Alliance Israélite Schools, a charitable organization. While based in France, this group was dedicated to promoting French language and culture but was nonpolitical and not allied with the Entente. Its main purpose was to educate the Jewish masses and to lift many of them out of poverty by teaching them modern skills to improve both their job prospects and their quality of life.

Local Jewish philanthropists were involved with supporting these schools. They were the elite of the Ottoman Jewish community and were often both bankers and industrialists. In the late nineteenth century many of them held Italian citizenship newly acquired during the Risorgimento (Resurgence or Unification of the Italian state in the 1860s-70s). Some of these families, like the Camondos (written in Turkish as Kamondos), Modianos, and Allatinis, were actually Ottoman Jews whose pan-Mediterranean family networks linked them both to the Italian peninsula and to the Ottoman Empire.⁵⁸ The Camondos, for example, were active in the nineteenth century revitalization of Istanbul, developing many neighborhoods, particularly the Bankalar Sokak (Banks Street), where their landmark steps are located in the Karaköy area. Decorated by the Porte, the second generation purchased a royal title from the Italian government that made them the "de Camondos." They held Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian, and Italian citizenship at the same time. The fourth and fifth generations of the family moved to Paris. The last son, Nissim de Camondo (1892–1917), an aviator, was killed at twenty-five, fighting for France during World War I.59

The Ottoman Jewish millet, as Ortaylı correctly observed, was diverse, dispersed, and made up of different political factions. These characteristics, as well as Jewish integration into the Ottoman system, made it unlikely that a Jewish-nationalist movement would catch fire at that time. Nothing before and during World War I served to galvanize the diverse elements within the community. It consisted of different language groups. The Judeo-Spanish-speaking Sephardim were the majority. Smaller communities of Yiddish-speaking Ashkenazic Jews were

composed of those who fled the Russian Empire or came from central Europe. Another group descended from the original Greek-speaking Jews of Byzantium, who dominated some cities like Yanya (Janina, Ioannina). Aramaic-speaking Jews lived in eastern Anatolia and the area that is now northern Iraq, under the protection of Kurdish notables. Arabic-speaking Jews lived throughout the Middle Eastern portions of the empire.

Nonrabbinic Jews called Karaites were marginally included in the Jewish millet too. The Karaites continued to follow biblical rites that dated from before the Roman diaspora (before AD 73), such as animal sacrifice, which had long since disappeared from rabbinic Jewish practice. While legally included in the millet, they had a degree of autonomy because their practices were very different, but intermarriage with them was prohibited by the rabbinic Jewish majority.

While the Sephardic cultural element dominated, the Jewish community was far from being a unified group and was characterized by great internal diversity. In the nineteenth century the elites were mostly Italian Jews, called Los Frankos (the Europeans), who formed their own millet in 1866. They promoted European-style modernization and educational systems, serving as the philanthropists for these endeavors. But the modernity championed by Los Frankos polarized the Ottoman Jewish community. Religious traditionalists like the Palacci family of İzmir fought against it and its institutions. Progressives like Los Frankos championed modernity and imagined different ways of living via new educational models and industrial technologies. In Thrace and the western coastal areas, from Salonika to Constantinople/Istanbul, these ideas were contested but also increasingly found supporters. Rural Jews living in small towns in the eastern areas of Anatolia and to the south in historic Mesopotamia were generally unaffected by these trends, apart from those who migrated to the large urban centers.

ARMENIAN NATIONALIST ASPIRATIONS

Armenians in the Ottoman Empire were perhaps the most integrated and successful of the non-Muslims. Like the Jews and Greeks, this group had different classes based on occupation and wealth. Unlike the Greeks, the Armenians were not unified by religion. As noted, Armenians belonged to three distinct sects: the Orthodox or Apostolics (also known as the "Gregorians" after St. Gregory the Illuminator), the Catholics, and the Protestants. The religious factions reached out to different external supporters. In 1831 Catholic Armenians split from the Armenian Gregorian

(Orthodox) Partriarchate and came under the influence of France.⁶¹ The Armenian Catholic Church near Istanbul's Taksim Square illustrates this relationship well. It seems to be organically growing out of the building beside it: the former French embassy, which is now the French Institute, a cultural organization. France positioned itself to be the protector of Ottoman Catholics, a useful tool to gain inside influence in the Ottoman Empire. Armenian Protestants, in contrast, were allied with American missionaries and their network of schools, of which Robert College was an example.⁶²

The Armenians also had different political factions, but they were not organized around the issue of modernity. Rather, it was nationalism that fueled the divisions. Inspired by the Greeks, the Armenians formed political groups with the goal of securing an autonmous Armenia. In 1887 the Hunchak Party was established in Geneva. Its counterpart, the Dashnak Party, began as a federation of diverse Armenian revolutionary groups dedicated to winning Armenian Independence via a "people's war." The Dashnak Party was founded in the Russian Empire, in Tbilisi (Tiflis) in 1890. Some Armenians supported the Russians in armed conflicts against the Ottoman Empire, as in 1828 and in 1877–78.63 Other organizations also existed, such as the Black Cross Society (established in 1878), the Defenders of the Motherland (established in 1881 in Erzurum), and the Revolutionary Armenian Party (established in 1885 in Van).64

A few of the Armenian political factions initially worked with the Young Turks to overthrow the monarchy of Abdülhamid II and reestablish a constitutional system in the Ottoman Empire, which occurred during the revolution of 1908. This brief foray into Ottomanism was short-lived, because the ultimate goal was to create an Armenian nation-state. To that end the use of violence increased in the 1890s and 1900s in a number of incidents that Turkish and Armenian historians interpret very differently. Decades of political violence and rebellions against the Ottoman state had informed the Armenian situation by World War I.

Rather than rehashing these incidents of violence, let us investigate the ideology that framed the quest for an independent Armenian nation-state. One primary source document that provides a window on contextualizing the events during World War I and illustrates Armenian political ideology of the time is the memorandum presented by the Armenian Committee to the Peace Conference held at the end of World War I at Versailles (1919), entitled "The Armenian Question before the Peace Conference." The document was presented on February 12, 1919, in Paris.

The document set forth the rationale for increasing the size of the newly formed Republic of Armenia and sought international recognition by other sovereign states.⁶⁶ It was presented by two leading voices of Armenian nationalism: Avetis Aharonian (1866–1948), president of the delegation of the Armenian Republic (founded May 28, 1918), and Boghos Nubar Paşa (1851–1930), president of the Armenian National Delegation.

Aharonian chaired the Armenian National Council when it proclaimed its republic. He was a journalist and educator who had studied at the University of Lausanne and at the Sorbonne as well as a signatory of the Treaty of Batum (1918) and of the Treaty of Sèvres (1920). Boghos Nubar Paşa was the son of an Egyptian prime minister, an intermediary between Armenian communities and France, and the president (and one of the founders) of the Armenian General Benevolent Union (1906–28).

In the first statement the Armenian national idea was linked to "centuries of oppression and of suffering": "Armenia has won her right to independence by her voluntary and spontaneous participation in the war on the three fronts of the Caucasus, of Syria, and of France, and by the sacrifice of hundreds and thousands of men, women, and children who fell victim for her fidelity to the Entente cause, which she regarded from the beginning as her own cause." ⁶⁷

The numbers of Armenian volunteers fighting for the French, British, and Russian forces during World War I were listed: (a) in France Armenians enlisted in the Foreign Legion; (b) in Syria and Palestine they served in the "Legion of the Orient" under French command, representing "more than half of this French contingent," and also "took part in General Allenby's victory"; and (c) in the Caucasus "over 150,000 Armenian men served in the Russian army on all the fronts; 50,000 men and thousands of volunteers fought under the supreme command of General Nazarbekian." The document readily admitted that Armenians "took over the defense of the Caucasus front...for a period of seven months," which "delayed the advance of the Turks." They also "rendered important service to the British army in Mesopotamia... [and] forced the Turks to send troops from Palestine to the Armenian front, and this contributed indirectly to the victory of the Allied Army in Syria." 68

The document asserted: "The Armenians have been actual belligerents in this war. Their losses during the war exceed 1,000,000, which, for a nation of 4,500,000, are proportionately larger than those suffered by any other race or nation." Thus the Armenian leaders admitted to active

participation in the war against the Ottoman forces, with the rationale that they would garner support for their nationalist agenda.

The issue of territory was paramount in the document. Numbers of both Armenians and their neighbors in Anatolia were cited to make the claim that the Armenians should be given not only the six vilayets (provinces) but also Trebizond (Trabzon) and Cilicia (Kilikya, the area around Adana). The Byzantines had supported an Armenian kingdom there as a buffer with the Arabs that lasted from 1080 to 1375, when it was taken over by the Mamluks. The Armenians admitted on page 7 of this document that they "do not constitute the majority of the population in Armenia but they do constitute the plurality of its population." The numbers presented were qualified with a disclaimer that the nineteenthcentury Hamidian massacres not only diminished the Armenian population by 300,000 but also provoked emigration. The numbers given for 1914 include 1,403,000 Armenians to 943,000 Turks and 482,000 Kurds. Tables of population of Armenians not only in Anatolia but in the Caucasus, regions bordering Armenia, and "more distant regions" were given toward the end of the document on pages 33-35. These distant regions included the United States, Russia, Europe, India, and Egypt. The document states that the total Armenian population in 1914 was 4,470,000. One of the tables compares the Armenian statistics to the population of both Christians and Muslims in Bulgaria "on the eve of their liberation." The Armenian writers of this document clearly were trying to make a case for recognition as a legitimate state, following the Bulgarian pattern.

Unfortunately, we have no indication of the source for these statistics. But it might be interesting to compare them to the numbers given for the same populations in Anatolia in reports prepared by British consular officials, geologists, and diplomats like Sir Mark Sykes (1879–1919). These meticulous ethnographic reports, complete with maps and statistics on the numbers of the population of each ethnic group in eastern Anatolia and "Mesopotamia," were made during expeditions to these regions from 1907 through 1915. 70 They were published in the Bulletin of the American Geographical Society, the Journal of the Royal Geographical Society, and the Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland. These reports were not academic exercises but the result of the gathering of intelligence on which populations might be friendly to British and American interests and which might be hostile. The oil business had started in this region as the "Turkish" Petroleum Company before World War I.71 Historians today make a distinction between the terms "Ottoman" and "Turkish" (used only for the post-Lausanne era of the modern

Turkish Republic). But British, American, and French sources often used the terms "Turks" and "Turkish" to refer the Ottomans.

The author of several of these detailed reports was Sir Mark Sykes, a well-known British travel writer, diplomatic advisor, and Conservative member of parliament. His untimely death from the H1N1 flu pandemic in 1919 was back in the news recently: Sykes was exhumed in 2008 so that scientists could study the virus. He is most famous, though, as the author of the secretive Sykes-Picot Agreement (1916), which called for the partition of the Ottoman Empire into territories that would be held by Great Britain, France, and Russia, respectively.

Comparing Sykes's published reports to the Armenian Peace Conference document, we see some interesting parallels. Part of the region referred to as "Armenia" in the peace conference document was called "Kurdistan" in the published British geographical and ethnographic reports. Armenian and Kurdish nationalist aspirations overlapped. Both groups claimed much of the same territory in eastern Anatolia and the area that is now northern Iraq (Sykes's "Mesopotamia"). The writers of the Armenian Peace Conference document acknowledged as much but used a Social Darwinian argument: the Armenians were "more civilized" and thus would be "the best people to establish a state in the area."72 Surprisingly, they used exactly the same language that Sykes and British geographers of the time used for the divisions in the Kurdish population. The Armenian writers of the peace conference document described "the sedentary and the nomadic Kurds" and wrote that they could remain in Armenia, because "a great many of these Kurds are of Armenian origin and that with the removal of Turkish influence it will be considerably easy to cultivate and maintain solidarity between the Armenian and Kurdish races. The Armenians, for the benefit of the two peoples, shall have the mission to offer the Kurds the advantages of modern civilization."⁷³

Despite its racist tone, this passage in the Armenian Peace Conference document hints at a long-standing relationship between the two communities. Armenians and Kurds in the Ottoman Empire were close. They shared patrilineal, patrilocal, and patriarchial family structures and intermarried. Kurdish notables protected their Armenian artisans, farmers, and merchants, as well as the Jewish minority who lived in their communities. Some Kurdish notables became not only the local leaders of their extended family groups and communities but also religious leaders, sheikhs in the Nakşibendi *tarikats* (Sufi orders). Protecting Christians and Jews within their communities was seen as part of a religious obligation; after all, these particular non-Muslims were "people of the book."

Violence prior to the upheavals of the 1890s sometimes accompanied a challenge over succession, when a younger man was vying for power to become the local notable (agha), or in cases of territory disputes between rival families.⁷⁵

Tension increased between Kurds and Armenians as the Ottoman state was centralizing in the late nineteenth century. The Ottoman state was adopting some of the characteristics of a modern nation-state, which included the closing and securing of borders. Porous borders and free flow of nomadic peoples were incompatible with the security needs of the Ottoman state as the nineteenth century progressed. This transition led to massacres and increased worry about border control. The writers of the Armenian Peace Conference document were of the same mind-set, noting that "the nomadic Kurds will be under laws to regulate the conditions under which they may move from place to place."

The writers of this document continued with precise instructions for the removal of non-Armenian populations in the proposed Anatolian Armenia and staked their claim to disputed areas. They were aware of the competing claims on the territory. The Ottoman ethnic tapestry, where many cultures coexisted side by side, would have to be "unmixed," to use Lord George Curzon's terminology, if Armenia was to be a homogeneous nation-state. The writers alluded to an agreement made with the "Hellenic Government" about the Black Sea region and Trabzon but did not give specifics. Cilicia (Kilikya) was a disputed area, already claimed by the Syrian Committee at the same peace conference. The Armenian writers made their claim based upon their population numbers: 200,000 Armenians in Cilicia as opposed to 20,000 Syrians. They also asserted that their military service to the Entente with the 5,000 Armenian volunteers in the Legion of the Orient gave them a claim superior to that of the 300 to 400 Syrians who also served in that unit.

This document can be analyzed in terms of the ongoing Armenian debate about territory issues and World War I. The ideology expressed linked the right to achieving an independent nation-state to several criteria. First, the great suffering of the Armenian people justified their claims. Second, their plurality in the territories legitimized the claims, even though they were not in the majority. Third, their service to the Entente during World War I, rather than marking them as traitors and untrustworthy because they betrayed the Ottoman Empire in which they were living, entitled them to the Entente's postwar goodwill and support. Fourth, criteria in the document outlined a plan for deporting non-Armenians from these territories, to "unmix" the population. Fifth,

the great expanse of the ancient Armenian Kingdom formed the basis for making the claims. Finally, the numbers of Armenians worldwide in the diaspora as well as in Anatolia and the Caucasus legitimized their claims. While the Armenians got their state, they did not get the territories outlined in the document. As in the case of the Bulgarians and the Treaty of Berlin (1878), much was promised in terms of creating a kind of nationalist megastate, but another war changed the situation. Other peoples from the former Ottoman Empire had competing claims and nationalist aspirations.

SOME CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Greeks, Jews, and Armenians were well integrated into the late Ottoman state as active participants in the creation of cultural, social, and political institutions. In the century before World War I ethnic nationalism became an ever increasing threat to the Ottoman Empire, promoting dismemberment, a process encouraged by the European Great Powers. Non-Muslims reacted to the opportunity posed by nationalism at different times or not at all. The Greeks, for example, had their primary national rebellion in the 1820s but continued to work toward annexing additional territories from the Ottomans, such as their acquisition of Crete (1898–1912), Salonika (1912) during the Balkan Wars, and the Aegean Islands (1914) via a Great Powers' settlement.

The Armenians, working within the Ottoman system, first were reorganized as changes in the millet system were instituted in the 1860s, including the "Armenian Constitution" of 1863, which established a new communal structure recognized by the Ottoman state. As the nineteenth century continued, Armenians developed their own militant political organizations aimed at autonomy. The Jews, in contrast, had *no* ethnic and national uprisings or internal political movements during this time directed against the Ottoman state. Zionism, for example, was a central European idea and was sidelined by Sultan Abdülhamid II. Local Jews, in contrast to the Armenians and Greeks, were consistently loyal Ottomans, serving in the Ottoman military after the 1860s.

The Ottoman government's relationships with the non-Muslims during World War I were also colored by past experience in a series of wars in the nineteenth century that culminated in the Balkan Wars (1912–13). During World War I the government's security interests were heightened by the potential for sedition and treason by Christian groups who had a history of rebellion and ties to outside interests. Both the

Armenians and Greeks had been supported by the Great Powers (Great Britain, France, and Russia) in their national uprisings and rebellions. Christian insurgent groups trained in Russia. They also obtained political, military, financial, and moral support from Great Britain and France throughout the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century. Some members of these groups worked against the Ottoman Empire in the arena of political and press opinion, not only in Europe but also via missionary publications in the United States. Despite these factors, however, Armenian and Greek elite families continued to do banking for the Ottoman government. Armenians also served as ambassadors and members of parliament, at the highest levels of the administration, immediately before and during World War I.

Greeks, Jews, and Armenians had different relationships to the late Ottoman state at the time of World War I. These communities were marked by internal diversity and were not monoliths. Different political factions, internal religious diversity, and regional characteristics influenced reactions toward the Ottoman state by these non-Muslim communities. For example, the Greek community consisted of both Ottoman Greeks and Hellenes, citizens of the new nineteenth-century republic, who returned to the Ottoman Empire to do business but participated equally in the activities of the patriarchate and the Ottoman Greek communal structures.

The Jewish community was characterized by internal linguistic and cultural variety, although Judeo-Spanish-speaking Sephardic Jews dominated. The empire also had pockets of foreign Jews, like those who fled the Russian Empire and received asylum in the Ottoman state, and the Yishuv, the early Zionist settlers in Palestine. The internal struggle in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Jewish community was between those who advocated traditonalism and those who championed modernity. Jews were generally loyal Ottomans because, unlike various Ottoman Christians, they were not interested in an independent state and found Ottomanism appealing.

The Armenian community was distinguished by a high level of success in integrating into the Ottoman system. Rural Armenians shared family structures such as patrilineal kinship, patrilocal residence, and patriarchical power structures with their Kurdish and Turkish neighbors in eastern Anatolia and "Mesopotamia." Urban Armenians were economically diverse and politically factionalized. They had not one religious orientation but three sects: the Armenian Gregorian Church (Orthodox, Apostolic), the Armenian Catholic Church, and Armenian Protestants.

Different sects were allied with various Great Powers. For example, the Catholics were aligned with the French, while the Protestants courted American sponsorship. Armenian volunteers and soldiers served on the three fronts of World War I in the Ottoman Empire in French, Russian, and British battalions. The memorandum brought by the Armenian representatives to the Paris-Versailles Peace Conference in 1919 outlined the ideology of Armenian nationalism, documented the participation of Ottoman and diaspora Armenians serving with the Entente forces, and staked a claim for a megastate based upon an ancient Armenian kingdom. But other peoples in the Ottoman mosaic also had nationalist aspirations and made competing claims on the same territories.

NOTES

- Justin McCarthy, The Turk in America; and Stanford J. Shaw, The Ottoman Empire in World War I, Vol. 2.
- 2. "Culture-at-a-distance" ethnography was a technique developed by Franz Boas and his students at Columbia University in New York in the early twentieth century. Boas's students interviewed European immigrants and Native Americans to reconstruct the cultures that they had left behind due to immigration or, in the case of Native Americans, that had been taken from them by the federal government's assimilationist policies. The culture was reconstructed via interviewing, artifact collection, and document analysis, rather than through the director observation usually done during ethnographic fieldwork.
- 3. My own ethnographic fieldwork with these immigrants was the basis for my honors thesis at Georgia State University (1976). Further fieldwork in Indianapolis (1978–80), Cincinnati (1980), and Miami (1971–80) appeared with materials collected in Istanbul and Israel (1980–83) in my Ph.D. dissertation (Indiana University, 1991): "Change and Ideology: The Ethnomusicology of Turkish Jewry."
- 4. For example, my ethnographic fieldwork in the Atlanta Greek community found narratives as well as documents (such as newspaper articles) about the anti-Greek riots in Atlanta when the first Greeks arrived in the 1910s. The rioters were Anglo-Saxon males who did not recognize the Greeks as "white" in the southern U.S. racially charged color spectrum. Greek as well as Sephardic Jewish and Syrian-Lebanese shopkeepers were happy to sell to African Americans, which moved them over the color line.
- For more about the shared musical materials, see Pamela Dorn Sezgin, "Hakhamim, Dervishes and Court Singers."
- 6. For other perspectives on Ottoman immigrants in the United States, see A. Deniz Balgamiş and Kemal H. Karpat, eds., Turkish Migration to the United States. Regarding the relations among non-Muslim communities in the Ottoman Empire, see the late nineteenth century ethnographer Lucy M.J. Garnett's Turkish Life in Town and Country, Turkey of the Ottomans, and The Women of Turkey and Their Folklore.

- Materials appear on the website of the AHEPA (American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association), an organization founded in Atlanta in 1922: http://ahepa.org/ahepa/.
- 8. Erich Feigl, A Myth of Terror.
- 9. M. Hakan Yavuz, "Contours of Scholarship on Armenian-Turkish Relations."
- 10. Dr. Steven Sabol (University of North Carolina–Charlotte), unpublished paper read at the annual meeting of the Association of Historians at Georgia State University (AHGSU) on April 13, 2012, in the keynote panel: "The First World War: A Centennial Appraisal of Global Origins and Legacies."
- 11. Mustafa Aksakal, *The Ottoman Road to War in 1914*; and F. A. K. Yasamee, "Ottoman Empire."
- 12. Donald Quataert, The Ottoman Empire, 1700-1922.
- 13. Ibid.; M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire.
- 14. Note that the majority of the people in these communities were not affluent or in the middle-rising class. Reports from missionary groups and Jewish philanthropic agencies immediately before World War I document the large numbers of non-Muslims who were living in poverty in the Ottoman Empire during this period.
- 15. Christine M. Philliou, *Biography of an Empire*.
- For a brief biography of Calouste Gulbenkian, see José de Azeredo Perdigão, Calouste Gulbenkian Collector.
- 17. Engin Özendes, *Abdullah Frères*; Catherine Pinguet and Pierre de Gigord, *Istanbul, photographes et sultans.*
- 18. Abraham Galanté, Histoire des Juifs de Turquie.
- 19. Abraham Galanté, Turcs et Juifs, for more about Jewish agricultural brokers, and volume 7 of Joseph Nehama's Histoire des Israélites de Salonique. For narratives that concern Jewish dairy dealers, see Annette B. Fromm's We Are Few.
- Hasan Kuruyazıcı, Batılılaşan İstanbul'un Ermeni Mimarları/Armenian Architects
 of Istanbul in the Era of Westernization.
- 21. Yusuf Halaçoğlu, The Story of 1915, 52.
- 22. Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, Empires in World History.
- 23. Vartan Artinian, The Armenian Constitutional System in the Ottoman Empire, 1839–1863.
- 24. Suraiya Faroqhi, Artisans of Empire.
- 25. Kanun Name de Penas.
- 26. The late Rabbi Joseph Cohen (1896–1985), leader of Congregation Or Ve Shalom, a Sephardic synagogue in Atlanta, Georgia, served in the Ottoman military during World War I. After the war he immigrated to Cuba and founded the first Jewish day school in Havana then made his way to Atlanta. He always spoke with pride about his service to the Ottoman Empire when I interviewed him as part of an ethnohistory project (ca. 1970). His papers are in the archives of the Breman Jewish Heritage Museum in Atlanta, Georgia. The Jewish Museum of Istanbul, as part of its permanent exhibition (2011) has a section illustrating the service of Jews in the Ottoman military.
- 27. See the memoir of Nissim M. Benezra, *Une enfance juive à Istanbul, 1911–1929*.
- 28. Galanté, *Histoire des Juifs de Turquie*, 5:28 (my translation from the French).

- 29. Ibid., 5:28-30 (my translation from the French).
- 30. Ibid., 30*n* and reproduction of the Ottoman original 297. This document and story also appear in Galanté's book *Turcs et Juifs*, published in Turkish as *Tűrkler ve Yahudiler*, 128–29.
- 31. See my doctoral dissertation, "Change and Ideology," and my article "Hakhamim, Dervishes and Court Singers." I have also interviewed Greek and Armenian religious cantors in both Istanbul and Atlanta who mentioned that their respective religious chant and its performance style shares *makam* (tonal system) and other musical elements with the elite Ottoman music.
- 32. My translation from the original Judeo-Spanish. I collected the words to this song from the late Henri Besso, who was from Salonika, in Miami Beach, Florida, in the 1970s. I found the melody in Istanbul too. The complete rendition is sung by Los Pasharos, an Istanbul Jewish musical group. For the entire song text and an article about the battalion, see Gad Nassi, *El Batalyon Djudio en la revolusion de los Turkos Djovenos*.
- 33. Stanford J. Shaw, The Jews of the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic, 227.
- 34. For more on Kurdish social and political history in the Ottoman Empire, see Brad Dennis, "Kurdish-Armenian Relations in the Late Ottoman Empire"; and Janet Klein, *The Margins of Empire*.
- 35. Tribal leaders, known as aghas, were often charged with protecting the non-Muslims within their unofficial territorial boundaries. See Ari Ariel's Ph.D. dissertation, "Trust Networks, Migration, and Ethno-national Identity"; and Isaac Hollander, Jews and Muslims in Lower Yemen.
- 36. Rena Molho, *Salonica and Istanbul*. Note that in this chapter, as in all of my writings, I use the Judeo-Spanish name and spelling for the city, "Salonika," as a tribute to that community. See also Orly C. Meron, *Jewish Entrepreneurship in Salonica*, 1912–1940, for more about the role of Jews in the business life of that city and the changes that occurred under the modern Greek state.
- 37. Kemal H. Karpat, An Inquiry into the Social Foundations of Nationalism in the Ottoman State, 92–93.
- 38. For more about British interests, see Joseph Heller, *British Policy towards the Otto-man Empire*; and Geoffrey Miller, *Straits*.
- An original handwritten copy of this document with the Russian imperial medallion can be viewed in the Municipal Museum on the Greek island of Hydra, located about an hour's boat-ride from Piraeus.
- 40. For details about the Greek Independence War and its leadership, see Richard Clogg, *A Short History of Modern Greece*; and Dimitri Gondicas and Charles Issawi, eds., *Ottoman Greeks in the Age of Nationalism*.
- 41. Alexis Alexandris, *The Greek Minority of Istanbul and Greek-Turkish Relations*, 1918–1974.
- 42. Ibid., 37.
- F. A. K. Yasamee, "Religion, Irreligion and Nationalism in the Diaries of the Bulgarian Exarch Yosif."
- 44. Sections of the Treaty of Lausanne that apply to non-Muslims are reprinted in Alexandris, *The Greek Minority of Istanbul*, as appendix A, 320–23.
- 45. Philliou, Biography of an Empire.

- 46. Ileana Moroni, O Ergatis, 1908–1909.
- 47. In 1964 the Greek and Turkish governments were involved in a dispute about Cyprus. Turkish Cypriots were being persecuted, so in response the Turkish government used the Contantinopolitan Greek community as a bargaining chip. It expelled all resident Greeks (Hellenes), who were not Turkish citizens in Istanbul. Greeks who were Turkish citizens were allowed to stay, but those who were not (about one-third of the community) were expelled. See Alexandris, *The Greek Minority of Istanbul*, 280–315. This event is the context for the popular Greek movie A Touch of Spice (Politiki Kouzina, 2003).
- 48. Galanté, Turcs et Juifs.
- 49. For more about the Yishuv, see Jeff Halper, Between Redemption and Revival.
- 50. Feroz Ahmad, "Unionist Relations with the Greek, Armenian, and Jewish Communities of the Ottoman Empire, 1908–1918," and "The Special Relationship."
- 51. Yuval Ben-Bassat and Eyal Ginio, Late Ottoman Palestine; Michelle U. Campos, Ottoman Brothers; Abigail Jacobson, From Empire to Empire; Esther Benbassa, "Zionism in the Ottoman Empire at the End of the Nineteenth Century and the Beginning of the Twentieth Century"; Feroz Ahmad, From Empire to Republic; Ilber Ortaylı, "Ottomanism and Zionism during the Second Constitutional Period, 1908–1915."
- 52. Ariel Sabar, My Father's Paradise.
- 53. Erol Haker, Once upon a Time Jews Lived in Kirklareli.
- 54. Sebouh David Aslanian, From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean.
- 55. Reşat Kasaba, A Moveable Empire.
- 56. Esther Benbassa with Miriam Kochan, Haim Nahum.
- 57. Aron Rodrigue, French Jews, Turkish Jews.
- 58. Pamela Dorn Sezgin, "Los Frankos: Italian Jews as Agents of Modernity in a Late Ottoman Diaspora," unpublished paper read at the American Association for Italian Studies (AAIS), Charleston, S.C., May 3–5, 2012.
- 59. For more about the Camondo family, see the exhibition catalogue edited by Anne-Hélène Hoog, La splendeur des Camondo; Pierre Assouline, Le dernier des Camondo; and Nora Şeni and Sophie Le Tarnec, Les Camondo ou l'eclipse d'une fortune.
- İlber Ortaylı, "Ottomanism and Zionism during the Second Constitutional Period, 1908–1915."
- 61. James Etmekjian, The French Influence on the Western Armenian Renaissance, 1843–1915.
- 62. Feigl, A Myth of Terror. See also McCarthy, The Turk in America.
- 63. Kemal Çiçek, "The Ottoman Armenians," and *The Great War and the Forced Migration of Armenians*.
- 64. Halaçoğlu, The Story of 1915, 17.
- 65. Çiçek, *The Great War and the Forced Migration of Armenians*; Feigl, *A Myth of Terror*; and Garabet K. Moumdjian, "From Millet-i Sadıka to Millet-i Asiya."
- Avetis Aharonian and Boghos Nubar, "The Armenian Question before the Peace Conference."
- 67. Ibid., 3, 4.
- 68. Ibid., 6.

- 69. Ibid., 7.
- 70. Leon Dominian, "The Peoples of Northern and Central Asiatic Turkey"; Bertram Dickson, "Journeys in Kurdistan"; and Sir Mark Sykes, "Journeys in North Mesopotamia," "The Kurdish Tribes of the Ottoman Empire," and "The Western Bend of the Euphrates."
- 71. Edward Mead Earle, "The Turkish Petroleum Company."
- 72. Aharonian and Nubar, "The Armenian Question," 7.
- 73. Ibid., 8.
- 74. Susie Hoogasian Villa and Mary Allerton Kilbourne Matossian, *Armenian Village Life before 1914*.
- Klein, The Margins of Empire; and Hakan Özoğlu, Kurdish Notables and the Ottoman State.
- 76. Aharonian and Nubar, "The Armenian Question," 9.
- 77. Dawn Chatty, Displacement and Dispossession in the Modern Middle East, 289.

The Exodus of Thracian Greeks to Greece in the Post–Balkan War Era

Ahmet Efiloğlu

Within two weeks of the Bulgarian declaration of war upon the Ottoman Empire on October 16, 1912, the Bulgarian forces captured the Ottoman territories down to the Çatalca line, after having scored two swift victories against the Ottoman armies in Kırklareli and Pınarhisar-Lüleburgaz. Just like other members of the allied coalition that formed against the Ottoman Empire during the Balkan Wars, the Bulgarians also initiated wide-scale massacres against the Muslim communities in Macedonia and Western Thrace. In the latter alone the number of those massacred reached well beyond two hundred thousand. Thousands of Muslims from Selanik, Dedeağaç, Gümülcine, and Kavala began to run away from such dire conditions, hoping to reach Istanbul and Anatolia through Edirne via Gelibolu.

With the Bulgarian capture of Edirne, the former Ottoman capital, these patterns of violence toward local Muslims, first observed in Macedonia and western Thrace, were repeated in the city, where the Bulgarian forces and gangs continued to attack the local Muslims. The Ottoman defeat at the hands of the Bulgarians meant withdrawal of not only military personnel but also public servants of all ranks, police, and gendarmes, clearly all at the expense of the existing Ottoman state authority. The Bulgarian forces that filled this void cooperated with the gangs instead of restoring order, resulting in the migrations of local Muslims from Edirne and nearby towns into the Ottoman territories.

In the midst of such painfully life-changing circumstances, perhaps worse were the attacks on the Muslims by their former Bulgarian, Armenian, or Greek neighbors. It was the Ottoman Greeks who perpetuated such intercommunal conflict the most intensely, coupled with

their increasing cooperation and sympathy with the invading Bulgarian forces. In certain instances the Ottoman Greeks operated under the command of the Bulgarian government. In other instances, however, they cooperated with the Ottoman Bulgarians in attacking the neighboring Muslim villages. The nonexistence of Ottoman state authority (as manifested in the lack of law enforcement) coupled with the high ratio of conscription of Muslim males into the Ottoman army truly rendered these Muslim villages helpless in the face of intercommunal conflict. The remaining few local Ottoman authorities bombarded the Ottoman capital with constant correspondence, asking for dispatch of soldiers and gendarmes in a bid to restore lawfulness. Yet the Ottoman personnel, consumed in the war effort, proved lacking to meet such local demands.

The activities of the Ottoman Greek populations were not limited to mere attacks on the local Muslim communities and cooperating with the enemy. Places like Gelibolu and Şarköy, which were not war zones, saw the most concentrated activities of the Ottoman Greeks, who struck deals with the local Bulgarian gangs in an attempt to incite uprisings to secure Bulgarian intervention. While martial law (*idare-i örfi*) was in effect in places like Gelibolu, it proved futile to contain the Ottoman Greeks' attacks on the local Muslims and to stop their collaboration with the Bulgarians. The Ottoman Greeks in Keşan, Malkara, and Şarköy accordingly cooperated with the Bulgarian forces on the move and the local Bulgarian mobs, staged attacks against the Ottoman troops, and attacked the Muslim villages. The official Ottoman investigations argued for "the necessity to arrest all of the local populations [*umum ahali*], including the district governor [*kaymakam*] and metropolitan bishop," thus highlighting the wide-scale Ottoman Greek complicity.¹⁰

The Greek attacks gained different dimensions as time progressed. The Greeks began to attack the caravans of Muslims who were on the run from Western Thrace. For instance, the subgovernor (mutasarrif) of Gelibolu communicated on December 29, 1912, that the local Christian community of Gelibolu had massacred eight carriages full of Muslims from the village of Ishakli. Foreign reports such as the one from the Daily Telegraph also noted the terrible living conditions for the unsettled Muslims in Gelibolu, saying that it was simply difficult to describe the situation there. The males of these communities were either killed on the battlefield or fell victim to the gangs of local Greek and Bulgarian Christians. Christians.

According to the Ottoman Ministry of War, the number of Muslims killed in the environs of Malkara, Almalı, Mahmutköy, and Mandras was

around ten thousand. 13 Both the official records kept in the midst of the war and the reports prepared by the Ottoman officials in its aftermath clearly indicate that such wide-scale massacres were perpetrated by the Ottoman Greeks on the local Muslim communities in all parts of Edirne, Kırklareli, Tekirdağ, and Çatalca.¹⁴ This violence that erupted concurrently with the Bulgarian invasion of Thrace ranged from petty crimes such as looting and theft to massacres, all perpetrated by the Ottoman Greeks in a bid to force the Muslim populations to leave the region and move to the Ottoman interior. Those Muslims who resisted such schemes came to face further violence. For instance the Greek cooperation with the Bulgarian komitadjis (members of nationalistic rebel bands) had its ugliest manifestations in Tekirdağ: the local Muslims, rounded up and locked in barns, were burned to death.¹⁵ Such events were not unique, however. According to Cemiyet-i Akvam ve Türkiye'de Ermeni ve Rumlar, published by the Ottoman Ministry of Interior's General Directorate of Settlers, the number of villages burned to the ground by the Ottoman Greeks in Thrace was 700.16 This physical destruction of Muslim settlements paralleled psychological means of warfare. The Ottoman reports often refer to instances of rape as well as sacrilegious attitudes such as insults to the Qur'an and attacks against mosques and Muslim cemeteries.¹⁷ The Greek complicity in the crimes of the Bulgarian soldiers is also clear in Ottoman correspondence.¹⁸

Such psychological and physical modes of warfare and intercommunal violence resulted in the migration of the Muslims in the region to Anatolia. Yet these patterns were limited neither to the Balkans nor to the Muslim sectors. First, migrations came to characterize both Anatolia and Thrace. Second, as the Muslim migrants began flocking into the Ottoman territories from the Balkans, the Ottoman non-Muslim populations in general and the Ottoman Greeks in particular started migrating from Ottoman Thrace and western Anatolia to Greece—an outward migratory pattern in the Ottoman territories that was observed for the first time on this scale.

The Ottoman Greek migrations after the Balkan Wars took place first in Thrace. To understand why the Ottoman Greeks began to leave the region for Greece, it is important to analyze what took place across Thrace during and after the Balkan Wars, with particular attention to the intercommunal relations between Greeks and Muslims. Even though the demographic policies of the Balkan states came to determine the patterns of Muslim migrations from the Balkans into the Ottoman territories,

the policies of the CUP only partially explain the Greek migrations. As much as the course and pace of the Greek migrations were influenced by the CUP government, the migrations were rooted in the problems between the Ottoman Greeks and Muslims in Thrace during the Bulgarian invasion of the region. Accordingly, by utilizing the relevant archival material, this study first looks at the activities of the Ottoman Greeks during the Balkan Wars and then analyzes how the war conditions came to wreck the already fragile intercommunal relations between the Muslims and Greeks. This chapter locates the CUP's policies vis-à-vis the Greek migrations from Thrace in this context.

THE CONFRONTATIONS BETWEEN THE LOCAL MUSLIMS AND GREEKS IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE BALKAN WARS

With the outbreak of the Second Balkan War the Ottoman forces took advantage of the withdrawal of the Bulgarian forces from Thrace, recapturing the territories up to the Midye-Enez line by July 15, 1913, and regaining the control of Edirne by July 23.19 After having gained control of Thrace, the Ottoman state began to resettle Muslim refugees who temporarily had been settled in Istanbul and Asia Minor, back to Tekirdağ, Şarköy, Çorlu, Kırklareli, Silivri, and Çatalca-towns and territories south of the Midye-Enez line.²⁰ Upon their return the refugees were utterly shocked to find out the scale of devastation caused by the Bulgarian invasion and the ensuing warfare. Villages were burned to the ground, and it was difficult to find a single house that had been spared.²¹ The farms, gardens, vineyards, and forests had been vandalized and wells filled with stones.²² While the Ottoman forces at this time were still engaged in combat against the Bulgarians in an attempt to regain Edirne, the scale of devastation fueled vengeance among the Muslim refugees who returned to the south of the Midye-Enez line. This region had a significant percentage of Ottoman Greeks and, in the midst of warfare, saw the highest levels of intercommunal conflicts. Thus, filled with rage, the Muslim refugees began attacking the non-Muslims in reciprocation.

The capture of Tekirdağ by the Ottoman forces on July 14, 1913, for instance, foreshadowed the impending future. The Muslims, concurrent with the entry of Ottoman forces, began killing the non-Muslims, burning their villages, and stealing their farm animals.²³ The official Ottoman report sheds some light on the scale of intercommunal conflict:

In Hasköy 103 houses out of 120 have been burned down, 35 people murdered, 7 wounded. In Malkara 23 Armenians and 2 Greeks have been murdered and 20 Armenians wounded. In the village of Kalyopa, which was composed of 280 houses, only 2 houses remained intact, all the rest burned down. In 11 Christian villages of Malkara, a total of 299 houses have been burnt down, 92 people killed, and 9 wounded. In 10 other Christian villages there has been no reported instance of arson or murder, but there were instances of theft of farm animals.

In the village of Kasım Pasha, administratively attached to Hayrabolu, 1 house has been burned down, 2 people murdered. In the village of Karaş, one local and 3 strangers have been murdered. In Tatarköy, which is composed of 63 houses, 24 males, 2 females, 4 children have been murdered, all houses in the village burned to the ground. In Durabehiç, which is composed of 73 houses, only 1 house remained intact after the arson, 7 people murdered, and farm animals stolen.

In the village of Doğan in the district of Uzunköprü 109 houses out of 165 have been burnt down, 15 people murdered, and 3 wounded. In the village of Subaşı only 21 houses out of 140 have remained intact after the fire. In the same village 19 people have been murdered and 1 wounded. In the village of Kavacık there have been 8 instances of murder, 1 instance of wounding, and 125 houses out of 160 have been burned down. In the villages of Tuğran, Subaşı, Kavacık, Dere, and Derunyaki, instances of theft and looting have been reported. Bulgarian, Armenian, and Greek villages such as Mestanlar, Çopköy, Tırnova, and Yeniköy have been burned down.²⁴

In addition to these, eight non-Muslim villages were burned down in Malkara.²⁵

This report prepared by the commission sent to the region by the Ottoman Ministry of Interior to investigate the events clearly shows that Tekirdağ was a site of serious instances of intercommunal violence. Yet, apart from this particular region, the Ottoman records contain no information on what took place in Edirne and the border towns and villages where the Ottoman war effort continued uninterrupted. But the intercommunal violence that targeted the Muslims around Edirne, coupled with the crippling effects of war conditions, indicates that similar intercommunal confrontations took place in this region as well.

Confronted by a growing scale of intercommunal violence around Tekirdağ, the Ottoman state began taking immediate measures to alleviate the situation. Once the Ottomans recovered the area from the Bulgarians, the subgovernor (mutasarrif) was sent to the region in three or four days and immediately began restoring order and promoting intercommunal dialogue by forming councils, distributing declarations in different towns and villages, and dispatching security forces (both mobile and locally stationed) in a bid to protect the non-Muslims. None proved useful.²⁶ Nearly every Muslim resident in Tekirdağ, which turned out to be the center of gravity of intercommunal violence in the region, wanted to take revenge on the non-Muslims.²⁷ While the Ottoman measures to contain these incidents were not limited to Tekirdağ, these measures for the most part also proved inefficient elsewhere.²⁸ Accordingly, the response of the Ottoman central and local governments got harsher as time passed. Those who attacked the Ottoman Greeks and other non-Muslim communities began to face a range of sentences including but not limited to capital punishment. Such harsh measures actually improved the situation, but it was extremely difficult to restore the intercommunal relations to their normal status in prewar times, as the events of the upcoming months and years would illustrate. The situation on the ground would get even worse.

The early months of 1914 saw an increase in the intercommunal violence in the region. The political confrontations between the Ottoman state and Greece over the ownership of Aegean islands were the macropolitical context that had a negative impact on these local conditions at this time. The growing influx of Muslim settlers into Thrace added further tensions. Settlers from Macedonia, where they suffered at the hands of the Greeks, sought their revenge in Thrace, where they targeted the Ottoman Greek populations.²⁹ To give an idea of the statistical proportions of the population movements and their negative effects, approximately seventy thousand settlers came from Macedonia and settled in Thrace, thus creating a tough problem in terms of intercommunal peace.³⁰ All these negative contexts made clear contributions to the events in the region in early 1914.

When April and May of 1914 are compared to previous months, we can see a clear increase in the number of crimes committed against the Ottoman Greeks in the Province of Edirne. For instance, in April six out of seven crimes in Lüleburgaz, seven out of nine incidents in Keşan, and all of the twenty-three crimes in İpsala were committed against the local Greek populations.³¹ The most common crimes ranged from extortion,

theft, and wounding to murder.³² The most striking was the theft of farm animals, which was commonplace across the region and was often committed by armed gangs who targeted ranches and dairy farms and stole significant numbers of animals.³³ The Ottoman documents continue to yield further details on the nature of these crimes. When the thieves targeted the Greek villages, for instance, they tended to seize animals from the herds and kill the shepherds.³⁴ In some instances the thieves took advantage of the cover of the night to raid the villages.³⁵ The report of the Civil Inspectorate of İpsala, dated May 16–17, 1914, mechanically detailed the nature of these crimes and their possible consequences:

In Hizir, Korucu, Kuz, Pazardere, Sultan, Ahur, and Haci villages of İpsala, a total of 13,868 farm animals have been stolen: 8,812 sheep, 500 lambs, and 1,203 cows were found through investigations and returned to their owners. Further search is underway to find the rest of the animals. Additionally, these raids damaged the villages and resulted in seizure of a good amount of property. While the damage is low in the villages of Ahur, Haci, Sultan, and Pazardere, the villages of Hizir and Kuz were greatly damaged. The stolen properties that were discovered through investigations were also returned to their owners. While the damage to the grain stocks was minimal, flour was still distributed to these villages. The gendarme forces are patrolling the area to restore order.

In Karlıtepe, Kızkapan, Kadıköy, Mahmutlu, Gündüzler, Mavroz, Silli, Karacali, Suluca, and Muariz villages of Keşan, a total of 5,514 farm animals have been stolen; 4,282 were secured back, while it became clear that most of the remaining farm animals were secured by the villagers themselves. The thieves, who raided the villages of İnöz and Kocaali, slaughtered some of the farm animals. The residents of these villages who were scattered to the nearby villages out of fear for their own lives escaped by boat to the island of Semadirek. These raids also resulted in the murder and wounding of some Greeks: one dead and two wounded in the village of Sultan, one dead and one wounded in the village of Hizir, and one dead and one wounded in the village of İbriktepe. In addition to these, twenty from the village of Kuz and five from the village of Hızır disappeared. It is now clear that these people who disappeared escaped to İnöz, Küplü, Keşan, and the island of Semadirek; ninety-one people who were involved in these incidents and crimes were arrested and the rest are still being tracked down.36

This report makes it clear that such incidents were commonplace in the environs of Keşan, İnöz, and İpsala but the raids into the Greek villages were not limited to these places. Similar incidents also occurred around Edirne, Tekirdağ, and Çatalca.³⁷ In addition to the theft of farm animals, murders created a constant problem of public disorder. April and May of 1914 saw a significant increase in murders.³⁸ A high number of Greeks were killed by the local Muslims as well as by armed gangs.³⁹ The cases of murder were the most common in Edirne, Pınarhisar, Lüleburgaz, Vize, Saray, Malkara, Hayrabolu, Uzunköprü, İpsala, Dimetoka, Gelibolu, Kırklareli, Tekirdağ, and Çatalca—locations that in the near future were to witness the most concentrated waves of outbound Greek migrations as well.

These events were not merely judicial matters, however. It is clear that from March 1914 onward the local Muslims began to pressure the Greeks to migrate from the region. Thus the major motive behind the raids of the Muslims in the month of April was to intimidate the Greek populations to facilitate their exodus. The events were not simply restricted to theft and murder: gunshots around the Greek villages, attacks against the shepherds, ransom, and damaging the fields and harvests were primarily tactics of intimidation. In this sense the raiders did not merely aim to steal farm animals but also possibly to deprive Greek farmers of their livelihood. And these efforts paid off: Greek villages that were targeted in these raids and were subject to tactics of intimidation experienced collective migrations.

For instance the *Tan* daily reported that the Seçi village of Tekirdağ had been raided and the Greeks in the village had migrated to Tekirdağ. On April 4 the village of Semetli was besieged and random shots were fired into the village, leading to a mass exodus of 2,000 residents of the village into Tekirdağ. Right after this news report the Ottoman Ministry of Interior ordered the Province of Edirne to gather information about these events. The provincial authorities informed the ministry on May 9, 1914, that the village had been attacked by nomadic gypsies. Only a few days after the raid all of the 2,205 residents of Semetli left for Greece. The series of the seri

One incident reported in the Ottoman documents clearly shows the real motives behind the raids into the Greek villages in which armed gangs told the Greeks to leave the village and threatened them with extortion and theft if they did not. As reported by the Province of Edirne on June 10, 1914, fifteen armed gangs attacked the Muariz village of Keşan and told the villagers to leave as well as to pay a 1,000-lira ransom. Some of the members of the gang later paid a visit to the village as well, extorted

95 lira and some other properties, murdered Vasil, the son of Andon, and then ran away. 45 According to the Ottoman correspondence, this village had been targeted before in the same manner with similar demands. 46

Such raids committed by the locals were repeated by those who had recently settled in the region. These settlers also tried to force the Greeks out through similar tactics of intimidation.⁴⁷ These people often tried to settle in the Greek villages, reasoning that they had been kicked out of the Balkans, so the Greeks needed to leave for Greece in reciprocation.⁴⁸ When the Ottoman forces intervened, the settlers even skirmished with the Ottoman security forces.⁴⁹ On top of that these settlers could not get along with their Greek landlords wherever they were settled temporarily or with their Greek neighbors in their new villages.⁵⁰

THE POLICY OF THE OTTOMAN GOVERNMENT VIS-À-VIS ITS GREEK POPULATIONS BEFORE AND AFTER THE BALKAN WARS

To a large extent the Ottoman state did very little during the Balkan Wars to prevent the complicity of the local Greek and Bulgarian communities with the Bulgarian forces and contain their disruptive actions. At the very beginning of the war, when the Bulgarian army was on the march toward Edirne, the Ottoman state began to relocate some of the non-Muslims with a proven record of mischief in their communities out of the war zone into the Anatolian interior.⁵¹ Yet the swift Bulgarian advance on the battlefield and territorial gains across Thrace made the implementation of this decision irrelevant. The coming to power of the CUP in January 1913 made only minimal changes to the existing policy. The only Greek villages that were targeted in the CUP relocations were those located near the Ottoman defense line of Çatalca.⁵² The residents of two more villages (Yeniköy and Yenişehir) located on the shore of the Dardanelles and with a proven record of espionage for the Greek forces were relocated into interior sectors that were only a two-day journey away from the coast.53

The recovery of Thrace in the Second Balkan War, however, changed the scene. The Ottoman failure to contain the complicity of the non-Muslims in Thrace with the Bulgarian armies partly stemmed from lack of means. While the Bulgarian forces withdrew, the non-Muslims who proved disruptive to the Ottoman war efforts remained under Ottoman sovereignty. After the return of the Muslim refugees to their homes in Thrace, determined to seek revenge against non-Muslims who had

attacked them during the war, the situation on the ground was chaotic and lawless, putting the Ottoman authorities at a critical juncture. Even when the Ottoman armies began to march to counter the Bulgarian forces after the outbreak of the war, the authorities in Istanbul began to wire orders to the units in Thrace, asking them not to use excessive force when dealing with the non-Muslim collaborators. Thrace, but the Ottoman forces had a generally lenient attitude toward those who skirmished with them and the Greeks who escaped to the mountains after the withdrawal of Bulgarian armies.

With the outbreak of the intercommunal conflict between the local Muslims and Greeks, the Ottoman authorities immediately took necessary measures to contain such confrontations. Martial law was put in effect immediately in Tekirdağ, the scene where the intercommunal conflict was the most intense, in a bid to restore the right to property and life and the authority of the state. 56 With the declaration of martial law the Ottoman state established courts-martial (Divan-1 Harbi Örfiler) as well.⁵⁷ Martial law prohibited the intrusion by local Muslims into the properties of non-Muslims. The non-Muslims had acquired significant amounts of booty during the war, so it was extremely difficult to ease the tensions without returning the goods to their real owners.⁵⁸ Accordingly, soldiers began to search the houses of the non-Muslims within the scope of the martial law. This resulted in the recovery not only of stolen properties, which were then returned to their owners, but also of guns and munitions.⁵⁹ With the increasing frequency of searches, the Ottoman Greeks, out of fear of being arrested, began to dump the loot onto the streets at night.60

The Ottoman state's attempt to pacify the local Muslims by recovering their stolen properties was complemented by the dispatch of additional police and gendarme forces to restore order to the region, which had suffered from lack of security personnel. The area even lacked public servants, who proved essential for a properly functioning local administration. The Ottoman state kept appointing new officials to the region and dispatching gendarme forces. One other important step to restore order and state authority was to punish Muslims who sought revenge and attacked the non-Muslims. Those with a proven case against them were sentenced to death, with the sentences to be carried out immediately. Rahim, the son of Hasan the fruit seller from İnecik, Tekirdağ, was captured, faced the charge of murdering Todori and Atnaş, the sons of Antuvan the grocer, and was sentenced to death. Adem, the son of Uzun

Mehmet from İnecikli, was sentenced to forced labor for fifteen years; Mestan, the son of Bekir, for ten years; and Ömer, the son of Aziz, for ten years. Hasan, the son of Rahim, was executed on September 27, 1913, once the authorization from the sultan (İrade-i Seniyye) was secured. Additionally, those responsible for the murder of one Greek in Kumbağı, three in the village of Işıklar, and four in Hayrabolu were arrested and sent to the courts-martial to press charges.

Similar legal measures were taken against the Ottoman security personnel who abused their power and jurisdiction. For instance, a major who was the commander of a battalion of military reserves (*redif*) was transferred to a different post because he did not prevent his soldiers from committing inappropriate actions in the Kalyopa village of Malkara.⁶⁷ Ishak Efendi, a police officer in Çatalca, was transferred to a different post in the center of the subprovince after complaints that he had overstepped his jurisdiction.⁶⁸ Tosun Efendi, the gendarme lieutenant who was deployed to Ahurköy of Vize to restore order, was court-martialed, facing a charge of sexual assault.⁶⁹

The Ottoman state also decided on July 23, 1913, to establish a commission that would investigate the events involving Muslims and non-Muslims. The commission was to investigate on a local level all the allegations put forth by the Greek and Armenian newspapers and voiced by the patriarchates, provide information about the criminals to the courts-martial, return the stolen properties to their original owners, and assist those in need with its allocated budget of 5,000 lira. The results of the investigations handled by the commission would be forwarded to the foreign consuls and be published in the newspapers.

Thus the Ottoman Greeks were in a difficult position after the recapture of Thrace by the Ottoman forces. The Ottoman government took a number of measures to ease and contain the intercommunal confrontations, but these policies of the Ottoman state immediately after the war would not last for long. From late October of 1913 the Ottoman policies would get harsher. Greece's demographic policies toward the Muslims in Macedonia, initially put into practice with the outbreak of the Balkan Wars, continued uninterrupted in the aftermath of the war when the Greek authorities insisted on forcing the Muslims out of Macedonia. Due to the war conditions the CUP government did little until late 1913 other than protesting the Greek policies in Macedonia. Correspondence from the Ottoman Ministry of Interior to the Grand Vezirate, dated October 26, 1913, noted that the houses of the Muslims in Macedonia were often trespassed with the pretext of searching for weapons, valuable items

that belonged to the Muslims were stolen by the soldiers and officials, and the Muslims were being pressed to leave Macedonia for the Ottoman Empire. Those who did not were arrested, put into prisons, and tortured. Thousands of Muslims accordingly left their houses and began to live on the mountains. The Muslim women faced cruel injustices; the Greek government began to settle Greek refugees into the residences of the Muslims; and the Muslims of Salonika were threatened with massacre. All of these policies were followed in an attempt to force the Muslims out of Macedonia. The rest of the correspondence noted that the protests of the Ottoman government to stop such cruelties and injustices did nothing to contain these events and in retaliation argued for similar treatment for the Greek citizens in the Ottoman Empire as well as for the Ottoman Greeks who supported the Greek cause. 73 Accordingly, the security measures of the Ottoman state got harsher toward the end of 1913. The Greeks of Thrace were banned from migrating into western Asia Minor, those who migrated were returned to their point of departure, and those who resisted the schemes of return were deported from the Ottoman Empire.⁷⁴

While the Greek policies in Macedonia triggered reciprocation on the part of the Ottomans, the confrontations between Greece and the empire on the ownership of the Aegean islands in early 1914 further sharpened the Ottoman state's policies toward its Greek populations. Greece invaded some of the Aegean islands during the Balkan Wars, but the issue had not been addressed decisively. The Treaty of London, signed after the First Balkan War, referred the issue to the judgment of the Great Powers. The Treaty of Bucharest, signed after the Second Balkan War, as well as the subsequent Treaty of Athens, signed between the Ottoman Empire and Greece, kept the clause intact. While the issue was still within the purview of the Great Powers, the Ottoman Empire and Greece continued talks to resolve it. But any solution seemed inconceivable, particularly because Greece continued to pursue its irredentist policies, as manifested in Megali Idea. Far from leaving the Aegean islands to the Ottomans, the Greek state was calculating the ways of expansion toward western Anatolia and continued its lobbying efforts in Europe over the ownership of the islands, arguing that they belonged to Greece both demographically and geographically. The CUP counterargued that these islands, so close to the western Anatolian littoral, were of critical importance for the territorial security of the empire and that they were geographical extensions of Asia Minor even though they had more Greeks than Muslims. Before the Great Powers issued their verdict, both Greece

and the Ottoman Empire announced that they were ready to wage a war over the islands and thus began a naval arms race by early 1914. On February 14, 1914, the Great Powers decided that the islands belonged to Greece. This decision came as a shock to the CUP cadres, who declared that they did not accept the ruling. In the subsequent talks with Greece, the Ottoman government accordingly tried to convince Greece. But the Greek side not only was irreconcilable but also began mobilization efforts on the islands. Through diplomatic maneuvers Greece tried to secure the backing of the western Powers to prevent the CUP from regaining control of the islands. Taking the issue one step further, Greece also asked for the disarmament of western Anatolia.

All these developments increasingly worried the CUP cadres. The Ottoman Greeks in western Anatolia looked favorably on a possible invasion of the region by the Greek forces, which resulted in additional rounds of Ottoman measures in regard to the area. The Ottoman authorities first initiated military preparations in western Anatolia, creating three army corps for İzmir, Manisa, Aydın, Muğla, and Antalya. 79 In İzmir it created the 4th Army Corps as an independent military unit.80 All these military preparations (including creating new divisions and purchasing naval vessels) were complemented by an increase in monitoring of the Greeks who favored the Greek cause, resulting in information gathering about the Greek notables.81 Keeping in mind the experiences of the Balkan Wars, when the local Greek communities openly supported Greece and Bulgaria, the Ottoman authorities saw the Greeks in western Anatolia as a problem of security. Hence it was necessary to reduce the ratio of the local Greeks in western Anatolia to more manageable proportions, which was only possible through forced migrations. 82 Yet such a process of forced migration, when officially framed, could lead to war. Even though the Ottoman government began military preparations for impending warfare, the officials wanted to avoid war as much as possible. Through an unofficial policy of forced migration of Greeks, the Ottoman government wanted to force Greece to stop its forced migration policies for Muslims and to backtrack on the issue of the Aegean islands.⁸³

This unofficial policy of migration against the Ottoman Greeks was first put into practice in Thrace, however, where the Greek communities, with a significant demographic ratio across the region, proved their disloyalty to the Ottomanist idea during the Balkan Wars by aligning themselves with the Bulgarian forces. In the view of the Ottoman state it was quite likely that these elements would prove disruptive to the Ottoman

war effort in the future. Accordingly, in early 1914 the Ottoman state began deporting the Greeks with a clear record of disloyalty, thus targeting those who were initially sentenced because of a wide range of war crimes during the Balkan Wars but forgiven after a general amnesty that the Ottoman state had to grant. The gendarmes accordingly began searching the Greek houses to recover any remaining booty from the Balkan Wars. Greeks found to be in possession of booty were deported. Those who were spared deportations were put under strict police surveillance. The governor of Edirne province initiated the process of locating the Greeks who cooperated with the Bulgarians during the war. Et is highly likely that those who were found were deported. Even if that did not happen, however, it is easy to imagine the psychological impact of such a process on the local Greeks on top of the existing conflicts between the local Muslims and incoming Muslim settlers and the Greek communities.

The Ottoman willingness to force the local Greeks out of Thrace through unofficial means also became clear by early 1914. Despite the continuing local confrontations between the Muslims and Greeks, the Ottoman government did not pursue harsh measures to punish those who continued to steal the farm animals of local Greeks. Those who were caught doing so were referred to the courts, and the animals returned to the owners. 89 The Law Forbidding the Theft of Animals (Hayvan Sirkatinin Men'i) that was applied to such instances of theft of farm animals actually included quite harsh measures. 90 But the local confrontations of this nature continued uninterrupted despite the law. Similarly, those who committed other crimes such as murder, wounding, kidnapping, and seeking ransom were also referred to the courts. 91 These legal measures proved ineffective, however: by February 15, 1914, a day after the Great Powers granted the Aegean islands to Greece, martial law in Thrace was suspended and the courts-martial were abolished. Thus those who faced serious charges were put on trial in civil courts. 92 Not only were the trials in these courts protracted, but their verdicts were far from deterrent. 93 A number of cases also remained unsolved. The security officials were slow in locating the criminals who targeted the Greeks. 94 All these reflections of an unspoken Ottoman policy toward the Greek communities shook the confidence of the Greeks in the Ottoman state, feeding into the opinion that the Ottoman state did not determinedly pursue those who murdered Greeks.⁹⁵ As Talat Paşa aptly summarized, Thrace was wrapped in fear ("dehşetli bir korku").96 Yet by early 1914 the Ottoman authorities did not show the same willingness to restore order to the region that they

once did after the recapture of Thrace from the Bulgarian forces in the aftermath of the Balkan Wars.

When the mass migrations of Greeks began in April, the Ottoman authorities did not do anything to prevent the migrations or block the paths of those who hit the roads for the littoral. When the officials were criticized by the patriarchate or other critics, the government defended itself by arguing that everyone had the liberty to travel from one place to another. Before the Greek migrants took to the roads toward either Istanbul or Tekirdağ they were asked to pay their debts incurred by taxation and submit a writ to indicate that they were leaving voluntarily. The local Ottoman officials were instructed not to convince these Greek migrants to do otherwise, to provide a safe journey for them, and to extend protection over their properties left behind. The other is a safe journey for them, and to extend protection over their properties left behind.

The Ottoman policies toward the mass Greek migrations were Janusfaced. While the Ottoman government tried to make sure that the Greeks were migrating, it also tried to soothe the vocal criticism of the Greek patriarchate by showing that the local officials had nothing to do with the mass migrations. As these criticisms grew over time, Ali Seydi Bey, the civil inspector, was sent to Thrace to investigate the situation on the ground. The government also told the patriarchate that it would form bodies of counsel to discourage the mass Greek exodus on the ground. Having accepted the proposal, on April 16, 1914, the patriarchate asked for permission from the government to send these bodies of counsel to Thrace as well as for some accommodations on the local level once they reach the region. The Ottoman government granted permission, communicated the impending arrival of these bodies to the local authorities, and asked for local accommodations.

This decision on the part of the Ottoman government was meant only to soothe the concerns of the patriarchate. Thus it was not necessarily a measure to stop the migrations. The Ottoman authorities actually wanted the migration to continue for a little longer. For instance, the civil inspector sent to the region to investigate the events was active in the environs of Kırklareli and Çatalca rather than the littoral of Tekirdağ, which experienced the most concentrated migratory patterns. ¹⁰¹ More importantly, the subsequent telegrams sent to the local authorities in the region asked them not to pay attention to the duties of the bodies of counsel (formed by the patriarchate and permitted by the Ottoman government) and instead ordered the authorities to prevent them from working effectively. ¹⁰² Greeks who were piled up in the port of Ereğli were asked to go on board immediately and leave the country. ¹⁰³ The local authorities

were also warned not to make it evident to the Greek migrants that all these processes were initiated by orders from the center. Both the governor of Edirne, Adil Bey, and the subgovernor of Tekirdağ, Zekeriya Bey, asked for immediate dispatch of ships from Istanbul to transport the Greeks away from the ports. After such demands from the local authorities, the government sent a number of steamers to the ports of Ereğli and Tekirdağ, including Millet, Antalya, Güzel Girit, and Necat, to transport the Greek migrants to Greece. When these steamers failed to meet the demand, the government also chartered some Greek ships for similar purposes. The government bought tickets for those Greek migrants who did not have the means to do so. The instructions sent to the local authorities also asked them to pay special attention to make sure that ships did not sail vacant. Such instructions indicate that the Ottoman authorities did their best to expedite the immigration process.

The Greek migrations began to stir public opinion in European capitals, and the Greek patriarchate mobilized the pressure groups within the empire to force the government to stop the migrations. Talat Paşa, the minister of the interior, left Istanbul on April 24, 1914, for Corlu to take various measures to stop the migrations. 110 Issuing a communiqué, he asked the local authorities to guarantee the lives and properties of the Greeks and thus restrict the very conditions that were forcing the Greeks out of the empire in the first place.111 Yet this communiqué seemed to have no effect: the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs noted that by April 29, the date when the migrations were banned, Salonika had received seven thousand Ottoman Greek settlers from Thrace. 112 Interestingly, even though the Greek side noted that "the migrations were fully banned," the measures of the CUP government actually did not amount to a complete prohibition. According to article 4 of the communiqué issued by Talat Paşa, the Ottoman authorities actually allowed the migration of those who insisted and signed an official note indicating that they were leaving the country of their own volition. For example, the subgovernor (mutasarrıf) of Catalca asked the central government on April 29 whether it was permissible to let some of the Greeks of Çatalca leave for Istanbul via Silivri and Büyükçekmece. The reply noted that not even a single person could be allowed to settle in Istanbul, so those who would like to leave their villages could migrate via Tekirdağ. 113

From the beginning of mass Greek migrations in early April to Talat Paşa's journey to Çorlu in late April, the Ottoman government tried to expedite the Greek migrations instead of preventing them and particularly focused on weakening the Greek presence around the environs of

Tekirdağ and Edirne. Catholic Greeks, however, were an exception to the whole process. A telegram wired to the Province of Edirne on April 28, for instance, asked the local authorities to prevent the Catholic Greeks from the Davudili and Paşaköy villages of Malkara from migrating on the grounds that they were Catholic. 114 The Ottoman government also did its best to settle the Muslim migrants into the houses of the Ottoman Greek migrants. 115 For example, a telegram wired to the Consulate of Salonika asked it to send 10,000 settlers to Tekirdağ. 116 Furthermore, the properties and farm animals that the Ottoman Greek migrants sold off well below their real value were purchased with the intention of delivering them to the incoming Muslim settlers. 117

The Greek migrations out of Thrace continued uninterrupted throughout May despite the arrival of Talat Paşa in Çorlu and the corresponding set of measures to prevent the migrations. 118 The concern of the Ottoman government in May was that the migrations did not take place on a mass level and that people did not try to migrate out of intercommunal pressures. 119 The central government accordingly asked the local Ottoman officials to permit the Greek migrations on an individual level if people left of their own volition. 120 Even though the Ottoman government tried to prevent the local Muslims from pressurizing the Ottoman Greeks to leave, the authorities had a hard time preventing the theft of farm animals by gangs and other forms of intercommunal pressures. 121 In his correspondence with Istanbul Adil Bey, the governor of Edirne, kept insisting that the members of these gangs primarily came from Istanbul and accordingly asked the Ministry of Interior to stop these operations. 122 In response Talat Paşa argued that the gangs were not sent from Istanbul: these gangs suddenly emerged in an attempt to buy the Greek properties far below their value or simply to extort them. ¹²³ Even though it was not immediately clear how these gangs operated in Thrace, the government tried to protect the Greek villagers by dispatching additional security forces. 124 It attempted to counter the attacks of these gangs. 125

Once the domestic and international criticisms reached a new high in May, the Ottoman government tried to take additional measures but still did not prohibit migrations in their entirety. Even as the government was taking new measures, it also tried to send Muslim settlers to both coasts of the Dardanelles. For instance, a telegram dated May 21, 1914, from Rahmi Bey, the governor of Aydın province, noted that 750 settlers were sent to Çanakkale. A telegram sent on May 25 by the subgovernor of Çanakkale, Murad Fuad Bey, asked the Ministry of Interior for an immediate dispatch of 300 households of Selanik, Drama, and Siroz to Çanakkale for settlement purposes. 127 With the resettlement of these

households in and around the Greek-populated parts of the Anatolian coast of the Dardanelles, the local Greeks reacted by attempting to migrate elsewhere. 128 The similar pattern of resettlements across the straits in and around the European coast of the Dardanelles evoked comparable reactions from the local Greek communities there. 129 A telegram wired to the Ministry of Interior by the subgovernor of Gelibolu on May 22 noted that those Greeks who had helped the Bulgarians during the Balkan Wars petitioned the subprovince and asked for permission to migrate. The subprovince of Gelibolu, acting within the scope of the earlier instructions received from the center, facilitated these migration schemes. 130 These examples suggest that some demographic policies were pursued through the initiative of regional Ottoman authorities, often at odds with the policies of the central government. Only the agency of the local authorities explains the contradictory nature of the response: the central Ottoman state sent additional security personnel to Thrace while pursuing the settlement of Muslim settlers along the coasts of the Dardanelles and western Asia Minor. When the government sent instructions to the Province of Aydın in an attempt to place Muslim settlers in the Greek villages, a process of Muslim resettlements began on May 21 in an attempt to dilute the Greek presence in western Anatolia. 131 This process would continue until early June when the pressures from the Great Powers intensified significantly and Greece declared war. 132

Part of the contradiction in the Ottoman policies was that the government tried to contain the Greek exodus in Thrace but promoted the Greek migrations in western Asia Minor. At this time Greece and the Ottoman Empire were about to begin talks on population exchange. One condition that the Greek side insisted on before the start of the talks was the prevention of Greek migrations from Thrace. 133 Both sides agreed on population exchanges in principle on May 25, which also meant that the Ottoman government promised to stop the Greek migrations by this date. A clear-cut instruction that entirely prohibited migrations was sent to the local authorities immediately thereafter. The telegram to the Province of Edirne on May 26, ordered that "those who were ready to migrate are, if possible, to be convinced to go back to their homes and, from this point onward, it is highly desirable that any sort of migrations be prevented at all costs." ¹³⁴ A similar telegram sent to the subprovince of Çanakkale on May 28 also banned the migrations around the Anatolian coasts of the Dardanelles. 135

Restoring order and restraining the criminal elements was integral to containing the population movements in the region. Until late May the Ottoman government issued a number of instructions to do so. Yet the instructions wired on May 26, 1914, to the Province of Edirne and the subprovinces of Çatalca and Kale-i Sultaniye (Çanakkale) differed in tone from these earlier orders. Now the central government blamed the local authorities for the failure to contain lawlessness and warned them that the highest local officials would face demotions and dismissal in the event of an attack against the Greek communities. Similar warnings dominated a second correspondence sent on the same day from the Ministry of Interior to the administrative divisions, asking for immediate arrests of those who attacked the Greeks and their transfer to the courts-martial for trial. Any disturbances needed to be reported to the center, and those soldiers and police who failed to follow its orders would be exiled to Yemen and soldiers would be expelled from the military. These same measures were extended to the civil officials as well. The ministry decided to dispatch additional soldiers to the Greek villages and on May 28 sent 200 gendarmes to the province of Edirne.

As noted above, the Ottoman government always maintained that the Greeks migrated of their own free will. To make sure that the government faced no allegations or charges of complicity of its local officials in these migrations and also to prevent possible arbitrary undertakings by the local authorities, the central government took one more step: creating a commission that would go to Thrace and investigate the allegations against a number of Ottoman local authorities. The duties of the commission were as follows: 140

- I. The commission is to investigate the allegations about the events and the acts of local officials during the Greek migrations in the province of Edirne and subprovince of Çatalca and, if necessary, in the subprovinces of Kale-i Sultaniye (Çanakkale) and Karesi (Balıkesir), and accordingly report back to the Ministry of Interior.
- 2. The commission will start investigations of all officials who showed indifference to the disturbances in the region in the aftermath of the prohibition of migrations by the ministry or failed to arrest those who tried to benefit personally in this uncertain social climate or showed bias in their dealings with the public and will report the results back to the Ministry of Interior.
- The commission will also initiate investigations into the allegations of aggression against the Greeks before the Ministry of Interior issued its prohibition against migrations.
- 4. The commission will serve to arrest those who tried to force the Greeks to migrate and those who played important roles throughout these forced migrations. This will be the most important duty of the commission.

- 5. The local authorities will immediately notify the commission about any disturbances that took place within the zone that the commission is appointed to. The Ministry of Interior will also inform the commission about any relevant information secured from other sources.
- 6. The commission will carry out the application of the instructions issued earlier by the Minister of Interior in Çorlu.
- 7. The commission will have the power to make decisions in an attempt to contain the disturbances and will inform the local authorities accordingly.

Thus the major duty of the commission was to investigate and initiate legal measures in regard to the complicity of local officials in the Greek migrations—the very source of allegations by Greece and the patriarchate. This is particularly important in the light of the Ottoman position that its officials were not involved in forcing the Greeks to migrate. To lessen the concerns of Greece, the Ottoman government immediately informed Greece about its decision to establish the commission and its duties via Galip Kemali Bey, the Ottoman ambassador to Greece. Greece expressed its thanks to the CUP government for these measures and asked for their extension to western Anatolia. The Greece expressed its thanks to the CUP government for these measures and asked for their extension to western Anatolia.

The commission began active duty by the end of May and tried to restore order and take measures for half a month in the environs of Tekirdağ and Çatalca. It immediately began investigating various complaints. 144 If these allegations proved to be correct, local officials were suspended from duty and transferred to the courts for trial. For instance, Lieutenant İbrahim and Deputy Police Captain İsmail were removed from their posts due their neglect of duty in the midst of the conflict between the settlers and the local Greeks in the village of Anarşa in Çatalca. 145 Yanyalı Yusuf Ziya, a deputy police captain in İnöz who allegedly extorted money from the Greeks, was found guilty after the commission's investigations. 146 The commission similarly began investigations into Sabit Efendi and the gendarme commander Rıfat Efendi after allegations of their complicity in theft of farm animals that belonged to the Greeks. 147 In another instance the commission asked for a replacement for the gendarme commander of the subprovince of Gelibolu, whose indifference and lack of discipline contributed to the upheavals there. 148 Those who failed to bring order to their administrative units also received due treatment from the commission. 149 For example, the kaymakam of Çorlu, Haydar Bey, was assigned to the inspectorship of Trabzon. 150 Similar changes of post targeted the administrators in places like Malkara, Çorlu, Hayrabolu, Şarköy, Uzunköprü, Gelibolu, Keşan, and Mürefte. 151 The director of the

subdistrict Evreşe in Şarköy was suspended from duty, while some other officials and members of the community were referred to the court. 152

The attempts of the central government to contain the disturbances in the region continued uninterrupted in June, but with many difficulties. The environs of Çatalca, where approximately two thousand Muslims from Salonika came to settle, became the center of intercommunal conflict. The settlers kept attacking the local Greeks, whom they hated. The government accordingly sent additional security forces to the region, while trying to settle the incoming Muslims elsewhere. Those who came to the region to attack the local Greeks were pursued. Once apprehended they were referred to the courts. The Greek villages elsewhere in the region also received additional security measures. The diligent work of the commission, coupled with the dispatch of extra security personnel from Istanbul, restored order in Thrace for the most part.

Even though order was restored to the region, some Ottoman Greeks in Tekirdağ, Gelibolu, Şarköy, and Çatalca still desired to leave, but the Ottoman government did not issue permits. ¹⁵⁹ As noted, the government had prohibited migrations entirely by May 26, and this prohibition was in effect throughout June. Nonetheless, the Greeks from the village of Naib in Tekirdağ arrived in Kumbağı to migrate. According to the Ottoman correspondence, these Greeks were so determined to migrate that it was difficult to convince them to go back to their villages even when force was used. ¹⁶⁰ By June 9 about six thousand Greeks were along the coast of Tekirdağ, ready to migrate. The provincial authorities in Edirne asked for a dispatch of ships if the central government chose to allow those who wanted to migrate of their own volition to do so. ¹⁶¹ The Ottoman government responded by highlighting the clear order to prohibit migrations and return those who wanted to migrate back to their villages. ¹⁶²

The central government's strict prohibition of migrations, applicable even to those who wanted to migrate of their own free will, continued uninterrupted until the second week of July. Once the delegates from the Ottoman state and Greece met in İzmir to discuss the terms of population exchange, however, Istanbul began to allow those who wanted to migrate to do so. On July 14, 1914, the government permitted the migrations of the Greeks from the village of Naib and the Greeks of Yenişar. ¹⁶³ In four days all the Greeks from the village of Naib migrated other than five to ten households who could not get on board the ships. ¹⁶⁴

After World War I broke out in late June 1914, the Ottoman government stopped implementing its unofficial policy of forced migrations of Greeks, even though the Ottoman state and Greece did not reach any

agreement on the critical issues of the Aegean islands and the population exchanges. The outbreak of the war changed the policies of the Ottoman state, which began to use the possibility of Greek migrations as leverage against Greece, which leaned toward an alliance with the Entente Powers. Germany, which tried to lure Greece into alliance, also rejected the migrations of Ottoman Greeks. This was undeniably a factor that shaped the CUP's policies, particularly after it secretly aligned itself with Germany.

By June this shift in policy had immediate results in Thrace, where the pressures on the local Greek communities to migrate were contained for the most part and order was restored. In certain places, however, the shift in policy took time to be put into practice, particularly in the environs of Edirne and Tekirdağ, where some local Muslims and brigands continued to exert pressure on the Greeks. 167 Around Dimetoka some Greek families whose male members had run away earlier continued to migrate anyway. 168 Yet the Ottoman Ministry of Interior did not wish to see any migrations whatsoever. When the central authorities received news of migrants who either left of their own accord or were forced to do so, they immediately sent out instructions to prevent migrations. 169 It became difficult to secure permits from the government to migrate, and those who took the road were asked to return to their point of departure. 170 Only in select instances did the government allow migrations for those who insisted. They were permitted to leave via Dimetoka on land routes, because the Dardanelles were closed off.¹⁷¹

With the Ottoman entry into World War I by November 1914, the prohibition against migrations stayed the same. The outbreak of the war immediately translated into military preparations along the Dardanelles Strait, particularly around Gelibolu, where the soldiers asked the local Greeks to leave the region. A telegram from Talat Paşa asked the military authorities to suspend such measures. ¹⁷² Even after clear orders such resettlements did occur in the military zones. For instance, the villagers of Kirte in Gelibolu were transferred to Maydos. 173 Similar migratory patterns could also be observed in the environs of Corlu, Edirne, and Dimetoka. Even though some decided to take to the road of their own accord, it is possible to discern that the local authorities were behind some of these migrations. The Ministry of Interior accordingly tried to intervene on October 22 with a telegram sent to the Vilayet of Edirne, noting that the ministry had received information that the villages of Kadıköy, Saltıklı, Mandra, and Küplü had been cleared out, the local Greeks had received orders to migrate, and similar processes were underway in Çorlu.

The ministry asked the local authorities to stop these operations. ¹⁷⁴ Confirming such reports, the Greek Embassy noted the presence of about six thousand refugees in Dedeağaç. ¹⁷⁵ Even though Talat Paşa clearly demanded the return of Greeks to their point of departure, migrations of the Greeks from Saltık, Germiyan, and Podime continued uninterrupted until December. ¹⁷⁶ After the Ottoman entry into World War I, however, the Ottoman state would begin to take new measures and deport the Greeks, whether they were located in Thrace or elsewhere, due to growing concerns about domestic security.

STATISTICS ON GREEK MIGRATIONS

The Greek migrations in Thrace first occurred in the midst of the Balkan Wars. Approximately twelve thousand Thracian Greeks deserted the Ottoman lands for Macedonia to join the Greek army and fight against the Ottoman forces. Both those who co-operated with the Bulgarian forces in the fight against the Ottomans and the remaining family members of the twelve thousand deserters began to leave the region with the retreat of the Bulgarian armies. According to Justin McCarthy's calculations derived from the Carnegie report, the number of local Greeks who left the region with the retreat of the Bulgarian forces was around twenty thousand.¹⁷⁷ According to Mehmet Faik Bey, the deputy for Edirne, this number was 28,800. 178 The exodus of the local Greek populations in Thrace continued uninterrupted after the Ottoman recapture of Thracian territories. Martial law enabled the state to arrest those who attacked the Muslims and stole their properties during wartime. Thus one critical aspect that forced the Greek populations out was the fear of legal repercussions as well as intercommunal reactions in the postwar period. ¹⁷⁹ The flight of the Greeks accordingly continued until the first months of 1914, but by early April these migrations had turned out to be collective population movements for the reasons explored above. According to Talat Paşa, the minister of the interior, the first instance of mass migrations occurred in the village of Yovani in the Saray district. 180 In general terms mass migrations occurred in places like Edirne, Tekirdağ, and Gelibolu, where internal disturbances reached new highs after the Balkan Wars. These places saw the most concentrated Greek attacks against the Muslim communities. 181 Fear of revenge was one factor that characterized these patterns of mass migrations. 182

During these migrations those who were close to the Bulgarian border simply crossed the Meriç (Maritsa) River to reach western Thrace.

The Bulgarian government transferred these migrants to Greece via Dedeağaç. 183 Yet the Bulgarian attempts to prevent such crossings rendered this route less favorable, 184 which translated into more concentrated movements toward the coasts of Gelibolu and Tekirdağ, which received migrants from the environs of Edirne. Even those who lived around Kırklareli and Catalca close to the Black Sea coast headed to the Tekirdağ coasts because population movements via Istanbul were prohibited.¹⁸⁵ With the mass migrations after April, the coastal areas saw the highest concentration of migrants. On April 25, 1914, Ikdam reported that 15,000 migrants were on the Thracian coast, based on sources from Athens. 186 The accumulation of migrants along the coastal areas clearly led to a number of problems. They often slept in and around the ports, always ready to board the ships, but the long wait resulted in terrible life conditions. The local authorities tried to provide daily supplies to the migrants, who did not accept these offers of help, despite the terrible situation they were in. 187

As is clear in table 13.1, which is based on the figures by Ali Seydi Bey, the civil inspector, 56,191 Greeks had migrated from the Province of Edirne by July 10, 1914. The table also shows the number of Bulgarians who migrated from the province as well as the number of those who were settled. 188

It is important to note that the total of Muslim settlers is indicated correctly in Ali Seydi Bey's figures, while the totals for the Greek and Bulgarians are inaccurate. The total for the Bulgarians should be 31,453 and the Greeks 55,587. Accordingly, 29,098 out of 55,587 Greeks migrated from Kırklareli, 17,989 from Tekirdağ, 6,465 from Gelibolu, and 2,035 from Edirne. These figures do not provide any data on Çatalca. But according to the "Census and Property Inventory for Çatalca" (prepared in September 1914) 6,461 Greeks migrated from there. Specifically, 4,816 of these migrated from the village of Istranca, 916 from the village of Podima, 265 from Belgrat, and 464 from Karaca. These statistics indicate that no one migrated from Silivri and Büyükçekmece.

Thus, according to the Ottoman official records, 62,048 Greeks left the Province of Edirne and District of Çatalca for Greece during the period of mass migrations. The governor of Edirne also indicated on December 14, 1918, that the number of Greeks who had migrated since the end of the Balkan Wars was 62,000.¹⁹¹ Yet these official figures did not fully expose the size of Greek migrations. The figures prepared by Ali Seydi Bey, who made his calculations based on the information received from the provinces, provided data that were lacking on the Greek

Table 13.1. Migrants from Thrace

	Migrants		Incoming
DISTRICT	Greek	Bulgarian	MUSLIM SETTLERS
Edirne Proper	430	_	2,431
Mustafapaşa	_	5,275	3,946
Seymenli	_	1,000	800
Lalapaşa	206	_	5,052
Dimetoka	1,051	1,736	1,049
Uzunköprü	348	_	3,500
Kırklareli	4,875	10,400	6,865
Lüleburgaz	3,263	1,342	2,246
Babaeski	4,002	932	2,697
Vize	13,442	_	5,790
Demirköy	1,536	2,097	3,143
Pınarhisar	1,980	4,181	4,161
Tekirdağ Merkez	12,337	_	4,102
Malkara	42	3,460	2,935
Çorlu	3,000	400	1,750
Hayrabolu	570	625	306
Saray	2,040	_	_
Gelibolu Merkez	539	_	_
Keşan	1,700	_	142
İpsala	141	_	185
Şarköy	497	_	500
Mürefte	3,578	_	2,516
İnöz	_	5	_
Eceabat	10	_	_
Total	56,191[sic]	30,508[sic]	54,116

migrants.¹⁹² It is quite interesting that his statistics indicate that only 2,035 Greeks migrated from Edirne, where the Greeks were the most concentrated. A quick look at the correspondence to and from Edirne suggests otherwise. For instance, the writ from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Ministry of Interior dated May 7, 1914, indicates that 2,500 Greeks migrated from the Province of Edirne and Dimetoka.¹⁹³ The statistics prepared by the Province of Edirne noted that 1,771 Greeks from Edirne and Dimetoka had migrated to Greece via Tekirdağ by July 2, 1914.¹⁹⁴ It is highly probable that the migrations continued after July, so

we can deduce that more Greeks migrated from the Province of Edirne than suggested by Ali Seydi Bey.¹⁹⁵

Apart from these official records, other sources that provide figures for Greek migrations also vary in their estimations, to say the least. According to the documents that allegedly belonged to Talat Paşa, the number of Greeks who migrated from Edirne was 50,004. It is clear that this figure was below the Ottoman official records. According to the memoirs of Halil Menteşe, the number of Greeks who migrated from Thrace was around 100,000. Tevfik Bıyıklıoğlu noted that a large portion of 250,000 Greeks in Thrace migrated to Greece. Stephen Ladas estimated that 115,000 Greeks migrated from Thrace. According to Yannis G. Mourelos, whose calculations are based on official Greek records, 60,926 Greeks migrated from Thrace between January 1914 and July 1915. Mehmet Faik Bey noted in 1918 in the Ottoman parliament that 82,000 Greeks—including the ones that left the region with the Bulgarian retreat—migrated from Thrace in the aftermath of the Balkan Wars.

CONCLUSION

The migrations of the Ottoman Greeks from Thrace to Greece were rooted in the events of the Balkan Wars. In Thrace, which was under Bulgarian control from October 1912 to July 1913, the complicity of the local Greek populations with the invading armies took different forms: outright cooperation with the Bulgarians, massacres of the Muslims, attacks against the Muslim villages, and looting of the properties of the Muslims. These actions resulted in the migrations of the Thracian Muslims. When the Ottomans recaptured Thrace from the Bulgarians in July 1913 the extent of Greek complicity during the war created a desire for vengeance on the part of the Muslims. Some local Greeks who sensed the impending intercommunal violence began to leave the region for Greece immediately after the assertion of Ottoman control. But the dynamics of the postwar migration were different from those of the earlier wave of Greek migrations at the beginning of the Balkan Wars, when more than ten thousand Ottoman Greeks left Thrace for Macedonia to enlist in the Greek armies in their fight against the Ottomans. The postwar Greek migrations, in contrast, were caused by local Muslims' wish for vengeance (reciprocation toward the Greeks) as well as the Greeks' fear of possible legal repercussions of their wartime actions in the Ottoman courts.

Addressing the way in which the Greek migrations started in the post–Balkan Wars period is particularly important because the existing

literature on the topic often frames the postwar Greek migrations only as part of the CUP's conduct, without actually taking into account the dynamics of the intercommunal relations between the Muslims and Greeks in the region during the Balkan Wars and how such wartime conditions could shape the postwar situation. 202 Needless to say, the policies espoused by the CUP in later stages shaped the course and pace of the Greek migrations in Thrace. When the migrations started after the war, however, the CUP government took necessary measures to secure the safety of the Greeks as well as to avoid the spillover effects of the migrations to other locales. While these measures did not secure complete stability in the region, the Muslim settlers escaping from the pressures in Macedonia came to the region with fresh feelings of victimhood and vengeance, thus worsening the manageability of the crisis on the ground. Despite such difficulties, the CUP government continued to show willingness to manage the intercommunal conflicts until late 1913. Particularly in early 1914, when the relations with Greece became further strained due to issues of the ownership of Aegean islands as well as the continuing Muslim migrations, the CUP began to take a different stance on the issue of Greek migrations and started following policies that facilitated such migratory patterns. This shift in policy, which saw the Greek populations as an element of threat located in the strategic part of the empire, thus favored the Greek migrations as a security measure—a perception largely rooted in the experiences of the empire with its Greek citizens during the Balkan Wars. The CUP government pursued this policy until the summer months of 1914, when its policy toward the Ottoman Greeks changed once again.

NOTES

- Justin McCarthy, Ölüm ve Sürgün, 151; Bilal Şimşir, "Bulgaristan Türkleri ve Göç Sorunu," 53.
- For examples of the impact of such Ottoman defeats in Thrace on the local Muslim populations and soldiers, see Georges Rémond, Bir Fransız Gazetecinin Balkan Harbi İzlenimleri Mağluplerle Beraber.
- 3. Cipher from Keşan Kaimmakamate to Ministry of Interior, 19 Teşrin-i Evvel 1328 (November 1, 1912), Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi/Prime Ministry Ottoman Archive, Istanbul (hereafter BOA), Dahiliye Nezareti Siyasi Kısım Belgeleri (hereafter DH.SYS) 112-8/8-3, Lef. 55; Midye Kaimmakamate to Ministry of Interior, 15 Teşrin-i Evvel 1328 (October 28, 1912), BOA, DH.SYS. 112-8/8-3, Lef. 34.
- 4. Ahmet Efiloğlu, "Balkan Savaşı'nda Bulgar ve Yunan Ordularıyla İşbirliği Yapan Rum, Bulgar ve Ermenilere Genel Af İlanı ve Affin Uygulanışı."
- 5. Rıfat N. Bali, "Edirne Muhasarası Sırasında Tutulmuş Bir Günlük I," 36; *Türk* Silahlı Kuvvetler Tarihi: Balkan Harbi: Şark Ordusu: Birinci Çatalca Muharebesi,

- vol. 2, edited by M. Kadri Alaysa (Ankara: Genel Kurmay Basımevi, 1993), 62–63; Ratıp Kazancıgil and Nilüfer Gökçe, *Dağdevirenzade M. Şevket Bey'in Edirne Tarihi ve Balkan Savaşı Anıları*, 162–65; Leon Trotsky, *Balkan Savaşları*, 222–53.
- Nuri Köstüklü, "Türk Arşiv Belgelerine Göre Balkan Savaşı Sırasında Bulgarların Edirne Vilayeti'nde Yaptıkları Mezalim ve Yerli Rum Halkın Tepkisi," 123.
- Cipher from Subprovince of Dedeağaç to Ministry of Interior, 21 Teşrin-i Evvel 1328 (November 3, 1912), BOA, DH.SYS, 112-13/16-4, Lef. 64; cipher from Dedeağaç Subprovince to Ministry of Interior, 21 Teşrin-i Evvel 1328 (November 3, 1912), BOA, DH.SYS, 112-13/16-4, Lef. 61.
- Cipher from Subprovince of Çatalca to Ministry of Interior, 13 Teşrin-i Evvel 1328 (October 26, 1912), BOA, DH.SYS, 112-13/16-9, Lef. 9.
- 9. Ministry of Interior to General Command for Gendarmery, 22 Teşrin-i Evvel 1328 (November 4, 1912), BOA, DH.SYS, Lef. 54/1; Midye Subprovince to Ministry of Interior, 15 Teşrin-i Evvel 1328 (October 28, 1912), BOA, DH.SYS. 112-8/8-3, Lef. 34; cipher from Subprovince of Keşan to Ministry of Interior, 19 Teşrin-i Evvel 1328 (November 1, 1912), BOA, DH.SYS. 112-8/8-3, Lef. 55.
- Investigation Report of the Command for the Bosphorus Strait, BOA, Bab-1 Ali Evrak Odası Belgeleri (hereafter BEO) 310109.
- 11. Subprovince of Gelibolu to Ministry of Interior, 16 Kanun-1 Evvel 1328 (December 29, 1912), BOA, DH.SYS, 112-19/37, Lef. 13.
- 12. Ahmet Halaçoğlu, Balkan Harbi Sırasında Rumeli'den Türk Göçleri (1912–1913), 40.
- 13. Ministry of War to Prime Ministry, 20 Kanun-1 Sani 1328 (February 2, 1913), BOA, BEO 310643.
- The full texts of the documents from the BOA, numbered 24/17, 25/61, 26/11,
 3, were published in Arşiv Belgelerine Göre Balkanlar'da ve Anadolu'da Yunan Mezalimi II, 4-34.
- For the official reports on the Ottoman Greeks' aggression during the Balkan Wars toward the local Muslim populations in Tekfurdağı and Malkara, see 1336 Şaban 26 (June 6, 1918), BOA, Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyeti Umumiye Müdüriyeti 3. Şube Belgeleri (hereafter DH.EUM.3.ŞB), 25/64, Lef. 2.
- 16. Cemiyet-i Akvam ve Türkiye'de Ermeni ve Rumlar, 17.
- 17. For the official reports communicated from the District of Havsa on the Greek aggressions against the local Muslim populations during the Balkan Wars, see 24 Şaban 1336 (June 4, 1918), BOA, DH.EUM.3.ŞB, 25/62, Lef. 2; For similar reports communicated from Subprovince of Gelibolu, see 1336 Şevval 18 (July 27, 1918), BOA, DH.EUM.3.ŞB, 26/11, Lef. 3. For an official list of such attacks in Edirne, see 1336 Muharrem 29 (November 15, 1917), BOA, DH.EUM.3.ŞB, 24/17, Lef. 1/8. For a similar report for the Province of Edirne, see 1336 Şaban 22 (June, 2, 1918), BOA, DH.EUM.3.ŞB, 25/61, Lef. 1/2. For similar reports focusing on Tekfurdağı and Malkara, see 1336 Şaban 26 (June 6, 1918), BOA, DH.EUM.3.ŞB, 25/64, Lef. 3.
- 18. For an official list of such attacks in Edirne, see 1336 Muharrem 29 (15/11/1917), BOA, DH.EUM.3.ŞB, 24/17, Lef. 1/2.
- Tevfik Bıyıklıoğlu, *Trakya'da Milli Mücadele*, 1:65; Yusuf Hikmet Bayur, *Türk İnkılabı Tarihi*, 284–309.
- 20. Halaçoğlu, Balkan Harbi Sırasında, 128-30.
- 21. Telegram from Subprovince of Gelibolu to Ministry of Interior, 5 Temmuz 1329 (July 18, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 112-24/61-5, Lef.4; telegram from Subprovince of

- Gelibolu to Ministry of Interior, 3 Temmuz 1329 (July 16, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 112-24/61-5, Lef. 24; chairman of the Commission for the Settlers to Ministry of Interior, 16 Temmuz 1329 (29/07/1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 112-24/61-5, Lef. 4; Subprovince of Çatalca to Ministry of Interior, 7 Temmuz 1329 (July 20, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 112-24/61-4, Lef. 20.
- 22. Telegram from Subprovince of Gelibolu to Ministry of Interior, 3 Temmuz 1329 (July 16, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 112-24/61-5, Lef. 24.
- 23. Ministry of Interior to Prime Ministry, 20 Temmuz 1329 (August 2, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 112-25/63, Lef. 53.
- 24. Ministry of Interior to Prime Ministry, 3 Ağustos 1329 (August 16, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 124-25/63, Lef. 95/1, 95/2, 104.
- 25. Telegram from Subprovince of Malkara, 11 Temmuz 1329 (July 24, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 124-25/63, Lef. 12.
- 26. Telegram from Subprovince of Tekfurdağı to Ministry of Interior, 5 Temmuz 1913 (July 18, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 112-25/63, Lef. 7.
- 27. Cipher from Subprovince of Tekfurdağı to Ministry of Interior, 5 Temmuz 1329 (July 18, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS. 112-25/63, Lef. 7.
- 28. Duplicate of memorandum, 8 Temmuz 1329 (July 21, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 112-24/61-4, Lef. 45.
- 29. Meclis-i Mebusan Zabıt Ceridesi (hereafter MMZC), İnikad 26, Celse 2, 23 Haziran 1330 (July 6, 1914), 612.
- 30. Ministry of Interior to Prime Ministry, 3 Mayıs 1331 (May 16, 1915), BOA, BEO, 326465.
- 31. Statistics of Crime in the Province of Edirne for April of 1330, BOA, Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyeti Umumiye Müdüriyeti Emniyet Belgeleri (hereafter DH.EUM. EMN), 84/3, Lef. 18, 13, 29.
- 32. Ibid., Lef. 18 and Lef. 29; Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 22 Nisan 1330 (April 25, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 71/34.
- 33. Adil Bey, the governor of Edirne, to Ministry of Interior, 16 Nisan 1330 (April 29, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 70/28; Adil Bey, the governor of Edirne, to Ministry of Interior, 10 Nisan 1330 (April 23, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 69/29; Adil Bey, the governor of Edirne, to Ministry of Interior, 10 Mayıs 1330 (May 23, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM. EMN, 74/24; telegram from Patriarchate to Ministry of Interior, 24 Nisan 1330 (May 7, 1914), BOA, Dahiliye Nezareti Kalem-i Mahsus Müdüriyeti Belgeleri (hereafter DH.KMS), 19/44.
- 34. For a list of incidents in July, August, September, and October of 1329 prepared by the Province of Edirne, see BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 63/22, Lef. 24; for a similar list, see BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 81/1.
- 35. Statistics for Crime in the Province of Edirne for April of 1330, BOA, DH.EUM. EMN, 84/3, Lef. 18.
- 36. Correspondence from the Civil Inspectorate of İpsala, 3–4 Mayıs 1330 (May 16–17, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 87/26, Lef. 6.
- 37. Telegram from the patriarchate to Ministry of Interior about Şarköy and its environs, 24 Nisan 1330 (May 7, 1914), BOA, DH.KMS, 19/44; duplicate of the post-script from the District of Saray, 11 May1s 1330 (May 24, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM. EMN, 76/6, Lef. 2; telegram from the Village of Çanta to Prime Ministry, 13

- Nisan 1330 (April 26, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 76/6, Lef. 11; Subprovince of Çatalca to Ministry of Interior, 17 Mayıs 1330 (May 30, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM. EMN, 76/19, Lef. 2.
- 38. Statistics for Crime in the Province of Edirne for April of 1330, BOA, DH.EUM. EMN, 84/3; Record Book for Crimes in Various Places, 1332 Cemaziyelevvel 20 (May 16, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 72/20.
- 39. Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 10 Mayıs 1330 (May 23, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 77/16, Lef. 11; Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 11 Mayıs 1330 (May 24, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 76/18; Statistics of Crime in the Province of Edirne for April of 1330, BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 84/3, Lef. 29.
- 40. Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne, 5 Mart 1330 (March 18, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 61/1.
- 41. Correspondence from the Province of Edirne, 26 Nisan 1330 (May 9, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN,71/27; correspondence from the Province of Edirne, 19 Mayıs 1330 (June 1, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 76/9; Province of Istanbul to Ministry of Interior, 24 Nisan 1330 (May 7, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 71/32.
- 42. Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne, 19 Nisan 1330 (May 2, 1914), BOA, DH.KMS, 19/46, Lef. 1/1.
- 43. Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 26 Nisan 1330 (May 9, 1914), BOA, DH.KMS, 19/46, Lef. 7.
- 44. Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 1 Mayıs 1330 (May 14, 1914), BOA, DH.KMS, 19/46, Lef. 10.
- 45. Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 28 Mayıs 1330 (June 10, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 80/16.
- 46. Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 12 Mayıs 1330 (May 25, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 75/27; Statistics of Crime in the Province of Edirne for April of 1330, BOA, Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyeti Umumiye Müdüriyeti Muhaberat ve Tensikat Müdüriyeti Belgeleri (hereafter DH.EUM.MTK, 62/11, Lef. 43.
- 47. Record Book for Crimes in Various Places, 1332 Cemaziyelevvel 20 (May 16, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 72/20, Lef. 9; Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 2 Haziran 1330 (June 15, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 85/26, Lef. 8; Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 2 Haziran 1330 (June 15, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM. EMN, 81/1.
- 48. Telegram from General Security Directorate to Subprovince of Çatalca, 2 Haziran 1330 (June 15, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 42/26.
- 49. Subprovince of Çatalca to Ministry of Interior, 31 Mayıs 1330 (June 13, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 81/3, Lef. 1.
- 50. Ministry of Justice to Ministry of Interior, 9 Kanun-1 Sani 1329 (January 22, 1914), BOA, Dahiliye Nezareti Hukuk Kısmı Belgeleri (hereafter DH.H), 3-1/44, Lef. 2; Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 9 Mart 1330 (March 22, 1914), BOA, DH.H, 3-1/44, Lef. 5; Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 15 Nisan 1330 (April 28, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM. EMN, 72/39, Lef. 7; Ministry of Interior to Ministry of Justice and Sects, 2 Kanun-1 Sani 1328 (January 15, 1913), BOA, Dahiliye Nezareti İdari Kısım Belgeleri (hereafter DH.İD), 164-2/1, Lef. 85/1.
- 51. Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Prime Ministry, 29 Nisan 1329 (May 12, 1913), BOA, BEO 312862.

- 52. Correspondence of Ferik Hurşit Bey, the commander for the left flank, 14 Mayıs 1329 (May 27, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 112-7B/7-44, Lef. 5; correspondence by Hacı Sabri Efendizade Ömer Bey, the owner of Taşağıl Ranch in Büyükçekmece, about the attacks of the Ottoman Bulgarians on the Muslims, 9 Mayıs 1329 (May 22, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 112-7B/7-44, Lef. 4; Ministry of War to Ministry of Interior, 27 Mayıs 1329 (June 11, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 112-7B/7-44, Lef. 3; Ministry of Interior to Prime Ministry, 17 Haziran 1329 (June 30, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 112-7B/7-44, Lef. 6; Ministry of Interior to Ministry of War, 24 Haziran 1329 (July 7, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 112-7B/7-44, Lef. 1/1.
- 53. Telegram from Muhtar Bey, the Ottoman ambassador to Athens, to Ministry of Interior, 11 Teşrin-i Evvel 1912 (October 11, 1912), BOA, DH.SYS, 112-6/6-5, Lef. 5; Ministry of War to Ministry of Interior, 3 Teşrin-i Evvel 1328 (October 16, 1912), BOA, DH.SYS, 112-16/22/4, Lef. 46; telegram from the Subprovince of Gelibolu to Ministry of Interior, 17 Teşrin-i Evvel 1328 (October 30, 1912), BOA, DH.SYS, 112-12/11/3, Lef. 30; Ministry of Interior to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 21 Teşrin-i Evvel 1328 (November 3, 1912), BOA, HR.SYS, 1959/10, Lef. 15; Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Ministry of Interior, 19 Kanun-1 Sani 1328 (February 1, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 112-21/42-1, Lef. 20; Ministry of Interior to Ministry of War, 21 Kanun-1 Sani 1328 (February 3, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 112-21/42/1, Lef. 9/1; telegram from Ministry of Interior to Subprovince of Kale-i Sultaniye, 21 Kanun-1 Sani 1328 (February 3,1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 112-21/42/1, Lef. 37/1; telegram from Ministry of Interior to Subprovince of Kale-i Sultaniye, 21 Kanun-1 Sani 1328 (February 3, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 112-21/42/1, Lef. 37/1; telegram from Ministry of Interior to Subprovince of Kale-i Sultaniye, 21 Kanun-1 Sani 1328 (February 3, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 112-21/42/1, Lef. 8/1.
- 54. Telegram from Ministry of Interior to Ahmet İzzet Pasha, the Deputy Commander-in-Chief, 2 Temmuz 1329 (July 15, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 112-25/63, Lef. 1/1.
- 55. Duplicate of telegram from the District of Malkara, 8/9 Temmuz 1329 (July 21–22, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 112-24/61-5, Lef. 29; telegram from Ministry of Interior to Enver Beyefendi, 6 Temmuz 1329 (July 19, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 112-25/63, Lef. 2/2.
- 56. Ministry of Interior to Subprovince of Tekfurdağı, 7 Temmuz 1329 (July 20, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS. 124-25/63, Lef. 6/2; Ministry of Interior to Prime Ministry, 7 Temmuz 1329 (July 20, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS. 124-25/63, Lef. 6/1.
- 57. Ministry of Interior to Subprovince of Tekfurdağı, 9 Temmuz 1329 (July 22,1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 124-25/63, Lef. 18/1.
- 58. Telegram from Subprovince of Tekfurdağı to Ministry of Interior, 7 Temmuz 1329 (July 20, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 112-25/63, Lef. 7.
- 59. Subprovince of Çatalca to Ministry of Interior, 14 Temmuz 1329 (July 27, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 124-25/63, Lef. 39.
- 60. For a report dated 16/07/1334 (May 19, 1916) prepared by the Ministry of War during the Balkan Wars on the incidents that took place in Keşan and its environs, see BOA, DH.EUM.3.ŞB, 26/11, Lef. 2/2.
- 61. Telegram from Subprovince of Tekfurdağı to Ministry of Interior, 5 Temmuz 1329 (July 18, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 112-25/64, Lef. 53.
- 62. Telegram from Subprovince of Tekfurdağı to Ministry of Interior, 8 Temmuz 1329 (July 21, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 124-25/63, Lef. 10.
- 63. Correspondence from Ministry of Interior to other ministries, 11 Temmuz 1329 (July 11, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 112-24/61-1, Lef. 26/1.

- 64. Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne, 24 Temmuz 1329 (August 6, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 124-25/63, Lef. 82/1.
- 65. Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 14 Eylül 1329 (September 27, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 124-25/63, Lef. 128.
- Ministry of Interior to Prime Ministry, 20 Temmuz 1329 (August 2, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 124-25/63, Lef. 53.
- 67. Subprovince of Tekfurdağı to Ministry of Interior, 11 Temmuz 1329 (July 24, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 112-24/61-5, Lef. 30.
- 68. Subprovince of Çatalca to Ministry of Interior, 23 Temmuz 1329 (August 5, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 124-25/63, Lef. 40.
- 69. Official Report from Committee of Investigation to Ministry of Interior, 1 Ağustos 1329 (August 14, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 124-25/63, Lef. 108.
- 70. Ministry of Interior to Guardianship of Istanbul, 10 Temmuz 1329 (July 23, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 124-25/63, Lef. 33/1.
- Correspondence from Ministry of Interior, 18 Temmuz 1329 (July 31, 1913), BOA, DH.KMS, 63/8.
- 72. Telegram from Ministry of Interior to Asım Bey, the Head of the Committee of Investigation, 27 Temmuz 1329 (August 9, 1913), BOA, DH.SYS, 124-25/63, Lef. 69/1.
- Ministry of Interior to prime minister, 13 Teşrin-i Evvel 1329 (October 26, 1913), BOA, DH.KMS, 1/43, Lef. 1.
- 74. Cipher from Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 6 Teşrin-i Sani 1329 (November 19, 1913), BOA, DH.KMS, 5/18, Lef. 2; telegram from Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 2 Kanun-1 Sani 1329 (January 15, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM. EMN, 47/14, Lef. 1; cipher from Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 11 Teşrin-i Sani 1329 (November 24, 1913), BOA, DH.KMS, 5/18, Lef. 7; General Directorate of Police to Ministry of Interior, 24 Teşrin-i Sani 1329 (December 7, 1913), BOA, DH.KMS, 7/20, Lef. 3; cipher from Ministry of Interior to Provinces of Edirne and Aydın and to the Subprovinces of Kale-i Sultaniye and Menteşe, 26 Teşrin-i Sani 1329 (December 9, 1913), BOA, DH.KMS, 7/20, Lef. 1/1; Rahmi Bey, the governor of Aydın, to Ministry of Interior, 5 Kanun-1 evvel 1329 (December 18, 1913), BOA, DH.KMS, 7/20, Lef. 5; telegram from Ministry of Interior to Subprovince of Karesi and to Province of Aydın, 11 Kanun-1 Sani 1329 (January 24, 1914), BOA, DH.KMS, 7/20, Lef. 2/1; correspondence from Legal Consultancy in Ministry of Interior, 12 Kanun-1 Evvel 1329 (December 25, 1913), BOA, Dahiliye Nezareti Hukuk Müşavirliği Belgeleri (hereafter DH.HMŞ), 27/36; General Security Directorate to Istanbul Directorate of Police, 8 Kanun-1 Sani 1329 (January 21, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.MTK, 68/38.
- 75. Bilal N. Şimşir, ed., Ege Sorunu Belgeler II (1913–1914), xvii–xxxv; for a study of the process of abandoning the Aegean islands to Greece, see Necdet Hayta, Balkan Savaşlarının Diplomatik Boyutu ve Londra Büyükelçiler Konferansı (17 Aralık 1912–11 Ağustos 1913); Elif Yeneroğlu Kutbay, Doğu Ege Adalarının Osmanlı Hakimiyetinden Çıkışı ve Bunun Aydın Vilayeti'ne Etkileri, 63–87. For an analysis of the socioeconomic characteristics of these Aegean Islands under Ottoman rule, see Şengül Ayoğuz, "XIX. Yüzyılın Sonlarına Doğru Ege Adalarının Sosyal ve Ekonomik Durumu."
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- 78. Şimşir, *Ege Sorunu Belgeler II*, clxix, clxxx.
- 79. Celal Bayar, Ben de Yazdım, 1578.
- 80. Cemal Kutay, Etniki Eteryadan Günümüze Ege'nin Türk Kalma Savaşı, 223.
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- 83. Tarık Zafer Tunaya, *Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler*, vol. 3, 580; Bayur, *Türk İnkılabı Tarihi*, 3:251–52; Bıyıklıoğlu, *Trakya'da Milli Mücadele.*, 92.
- 84. Ministry of Interior to Tekfurdağı, 4 Rabiulevvel 1332 (January 31, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 50/10; Ministry of Interior to Ministry of Justice, 22 Mayıs 1330 (June 4, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 77/24, Lef. 1/1; Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 12 Şubat 1329 (February 25, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 53/21, Lef. 2.
- 85. Cipher from Ministry of Interior to Hacı Adil Beyefendi, the governor of Edirne, 13 Mart 1330 (March 26, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 422/32
- 86. Statement from the Province of Edirne as a response to the allegations by the patriarchate, 10 May1s 1330 (May 23, 1914) BOA, DH.KMS, 19/55, Lef. 8/2.
- 87. Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 1 Nisan 1330 (April 14, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 67/10; Ministry of Interior to Subprovince of Kale-i Sultaniye, 6 May 1330 (May 19, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 63/1, Lef. 1/1.
- 88. Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 21 Nisan 1330 (May 4, 1914), BOA, DH.KMS, 16/38, Lef. 7.
- 89. Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 5 Haziran 1330 (June 18, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 69/29; Subprovince of Çatalca to Ministry of Interior, 15 Mayıs 1330 (May 28, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 75/45; Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 18 Mayıs 1330 (May 31, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM. EMN, 76/23; Correspondence from District of Saray, 11 Mayıs 1330 (May 24, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 76/6, Lef. 2; deputy governor of Istanbul to Ministry of Interior, 21 Mayıs 1330 (June 3, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 77/19.
- 90. As an example of the application of this law, see Adil Bey, the governor of Edirne, to Ministry of Interior, 10 May1s 1330 (May 23, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 74/24; statistics prepared by the Province of Edirne for the month of April 1914, BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 84/3, Lef. 4; Düstur, 2. tertip, C. 5, Dersaadet Matbaas1 (1332 [1914]), 315–17; Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 10 May1s 1330 (May 23, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 77/16 Lef. 11; Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 11 May1s 1330 (May 24, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 76/18; Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 22 May1s 1330 (June 4, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 78/16; Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 2 Haziran 1330 (June 15, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 85/26, Lef. 8; Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 2 Haziran 1330 (June 15, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 81/1;

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- 91. Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 10 May1s 1330 (May 23, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 77/16 Lef. 11; Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 11 May1s 1330 (May 24, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 76/18; Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 22 May1s 1330 (June 4, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 78/16; Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 2 Haziran 1330 (June 15, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 85/26, Lef. 8; Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 2 Haziran 1330 (June 15, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 81/1; Statistics of Crime in the Province of Edirne for May of 1330, BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 77/16; list of the brigands and criminals captured after pursuit by police and gendarmes in the Subprovince of Kale-i Sultaniye in Kanun-1 Sani of 1329, 10 Şubat 1329 (February 23, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 56/20, Lef. 2; list of the brigands and criminals captured after pursuit by police and gendarmes in the Subprovince of Kale-i Sultaniye in Kanun-1 Evvel of 1329, 3 Şubat 1329 (February 16, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 54/14, Lef. 2; list of the suspects under pursuit in the Province of Edirne for February of 1329, 19 Mart 1330 (April 1, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 64/8.
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- 93. List of the brigands and criminals captured after pursuit by police and gendarmes in the Subprovince of Kale-i Sultaniye in Kanun-1 Sani of 1329, 10 Şubat 1329 (February 23, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 56/20, Lef. 2; list of the brigands and criminals captured after pursuit by police and gendarmes in the Subprovince of Kale-i Sultaniye in Kanun-1 Evvel of 1329, 3 Şubat 1329 (February 16, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 54/14, Lef. 2.
- 94. Telegram from Şarköy to the patriarchate, 24 Nisan 1330 (May 7, 1914), BOA, DH.KMS, 19/44.
- 95. Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 2 Nisan 1330 (April 15, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 67/16.
- 96. *MMZC*, Inikad 26, Celse 2, 23 Haziran 1330 (July 6, 1914), 612.
- 97. Cipher from Ahmet Bey, kaymakam of Vize, to Ministry of Interior, 18 Mart 1330 (March 31, 1914), BOA, DH.KMS, 19/68, Lef. 3.
- 98. Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne, Nisan 1330 (April 1914), BOA, DH.KMS, 19/45, Lef. 3.
- 99. Ministry of Justice and Sects to Ministry of Interior, 3 Nisan 1330 (April 16, 1914), BOA, DH.KMS, 19/45, Lef. 13.
- 100. Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne, 3 Nisan 1330 (April 16, 1914), BOA, DH.KMS, 19/45, Lef. 12/1.
- 101. Cipher from Ali Seydi Bey, civil inspector, to Ministry of Interior, 6 Nisan 1330 (April 19, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 424/47; cipher from Ali Seydi Bey, civil

- inspector, to Ministry of Interior 10 Nisan 1330 (April 23, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 424/92.
- 102. Cipher from Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne, 22 Mart 1330 (April 4, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 39/163.
- 103. Cipher from Ministry of Interior to Subprovince of Tekfurdağı, 3 Nisan 1330 (April 16, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 40/17; telegram from Ministry of Interior to Subprovince of Tekfurdağı, 7 Nisan 1330 (April 20, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 40/58.
- 104. Telegram from Ministry of Interior to Subprovince of Tekfurdağı, 11 Mayıs 1330 (May 14, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 40/11.
- 105. Cipher from Adil Bey, the governor of Edirne, to Ministry of Interior, 7 Nisan 1330 (April 20, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 424/54.
- 106. Cipher from Zekeriya Bey, the subgovernor of Tekfurdağı, to Ministry of Interior, 1/2 Nisan 1330 (April 14–15, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 424/5; cipher from Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne, 7 Nisan 1330 (April 20, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 40/48
- 107. Telegram from Ministry of Interior to Subprovince of Tekfurdağı, 7 Nisan 1330 (April 20, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 40/58.
- 108. Telegram from Ministry of Interior to Subprovince of Tekfurdağı, 2 Nisan 1330 (April 15, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 40/13; cipher from Zekeriya Bey, the subgovernor of Tekfurdağı, to Ministry of Interior, 10-11 Nisan 1330 (April 23–24, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 424/93
- 109. Telegram from Ministry of Interior to Subprovince of Tekfurdağı, 8 Nisan 1330 (April 21, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 40/68.
- 110. Ministry of Interior to Prime Ministry, 13 Nisan 1330 (April 26, 1914), BOA, Hariciye Nezareti Siyasî Belgeleri (hereafter HR.SYS), 2033/1, Lef. 20–22; decision made by the cabinet on May 17, 1914, BOA, Meclis-i Vükela Mazbataları (hereafter MV), 188/28.
- 111. Decisions taken in Çorlu by the minister of interior on 12 Nisan 1330 (April 24, 1914); BOA, HR.SYS, 2033/1, Lef. 25. These decisions issued by Talat Paşa were published in the April 27, 1914, issue of the daily *İkdam: İkdam 6*171, 14 Nisan 1330, 1; writ from Province of Edirne to its administrative subdivisions, 15 Nisan 1330 (April 28, 1914), BOA, HR.SYS, 2033/1, Lef. 19; this writ from the Province of Edirne was published in *İkdam* daily: *İkdam*, 14 Nisan 1330 (April 27, 1914).
- 112. Telegram from Georgios Streit, the Greek minister of foreign affairs, to Greek Embassy in Petersburg, 16 Nisan 1330 (April 29, 1914), BOA, HR.SYS, 2033/1, Lef. 29.
- 113. Cipher from Subprovince of Çatalca to Ministry of Interior, 16 Nisan 1330 (April 19, 1914), BOA, DH.KMS, 19/42, Lef. 2; for the response on the same day by the Ministry of Interior, see Lef. 1/1.
- 114. Cipher from Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne, 15 Nisan 1330 (April 28, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 40/100.
- 115. Cipher from Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne, 10 Nisan 1330 (April 23, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 40/81.
- 116. Cipher from Ministry of Interior to the Ottoman Consulate in Salonika, 10 Nisan 1330 (April 23, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 40/82.
- 117. Cipher from Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne, 10 Nisan 1330 (April 23,

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- 118. Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 17 May1s 1330 (May 30, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 76/7; cipher from Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne, 13 May1s 1330 (May 26, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 41/78; Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 24 Nisan 1330 (May 7, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 71/31.
- 119. Cipher from Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne, 19 Mart 1330 (April 1, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 39/138; cipher from Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne, 5 Nisan 1330 (April 18, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 40/38; cipher from Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne, 9 Nisan 1330 (April 22, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 40/71.
- 120. Cipher from Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne, 18 Mayıs 1330 (May 31, 1914), BOA, DH.KMS, 19/52, Lef. 3/1, 1/1.
- 121. Cipher from Ali Seydi Bey, civil inspector, to Ministry of Interior, 13 Nisan 1330 (April 26, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 425/24.
- 122. Cipher from Adil Bey, the governor of Edirne, to Ministry of Interior, 7 Nisan 1330 (April 21, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 424/55; cipher from Adil Bey, the governor of Edirne, to Ministry of Interior, 14 Mayıs 1330 (May 27, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 428/22.
- 123. Cipher from Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne, 8 Nisan 1330 (April 21, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 40/64; cipher from Ministry of Interior to Subprovince of Çatalca, 8 Nisan 1330 (April 21, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 40/63
- 124. Cipher from Ministry of Interior to Subprovince of Çatalca, 17 Nisan 1330 (April 30, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 41/111; cipher from Ali Seydi Bey, civil inspector, to Ministry of Interior, 13 Nisan 1330 (April 26, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 425/24; cipher from Ali Seydi Bey, civil inspector, to Ministry of Interior, 13 Nisan 1330 (April 26, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 425/19; cipher from Subprovince of Çatalca to Ministry of Interior, 13 Mayıs 1330 (May 26, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 427/119; cipher from Ministry of Interior to Subprovince of Çatalca, 13 Nisan 133 (April 26, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 40/96.
- 125. Cipher from Adil Bey, the governor of Edirne, to Ministry of Interior, 16–17 Mayıs 1330 (May 29–30, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 428/50
- 126. Cipher from Rahmi Bey, the governor of Aydın, to Ministry of Interior, 8 Mayıs 1330 (May 21, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 427/49.
- 127. Cipher from the subgovernor of Kala-i Sultaniye, to Ministry of Interior, 12 Mayıs 1330 (May 25, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 427/96.
- 128. Cipher from Murad Fuad Bey, the subgovernor of Kala-i Sultaniye, to Ministry of Interior, 13 Mayıs 1330 (May 26, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 427/114; cipher from Murad Fuad Bey, the subgovernor of Kala-i Sultaniye, to Ministry of Interior, 15 Mayıs 1330 (May 28, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 428/40; cipher from Murad Fuad Bey, the subgovernor of Kala-i Sultaniye, to Ministry of Interior, 15 Mayıs 1330 (May 28, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 428/41; cipher from Murad Fuad Bey, the subgovernor of Kala-i Sultaniye, to Ministry of Interior, 11 Mayıs 1330 (May 24, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 427/84
- 129. Cipher from Ministry of Interior to Subprovince of Gelibolu, 8 Mayıs 1330 (May 21, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 41/40; cipher from Ministry of Interior to Subprovince of Gelibolu, 20 Mayıs 1330 (June 2, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 41/140.

- 130. Cipher from Subprovince of Gelibolu to Ministry of Interior, 9 Mayıs 1330 (May 22, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 427/58.
- 131. Cipher from Ministry of Interior to Province of Aydın, 8 Mayıs 1330 (May 21, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 41/37.
- 132. Taner Akçam, "Ermeni Meselesi Hallolunmuştur," 95, 111–13; Hasan Taner Kerimoğlu, İttihat-Terakki ve Rumlar, 1908–1914, 426; Şimşir, Ege Sorunu Belgeler II, cci, ccix.
- 133. Galip Kemali Söylemezoğlu, *Hatıralar Atina Sefareti (1913–1916)*, 103–6.
- 134. Cipher from Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne, 13 Mayıs 1330 (May 26, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 41/78.
- 135. Cipher from Ministry of Interior to Subprovince of Çanakkale, 15 Mayıs 1330 (May 28, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 41/104.
- Cipher from Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne and to Subprovinces of Çatalca and Kale-i Sultaniye, 13 Mayıs 1330 (May 26, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 41/85.
- 137. Cipher from Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne and to Subprovinces of Catalca and Kale-i Sultaniye, 13 May1s 1330 (May 26, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 41/91.
- 138. Correspondence from Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior and its dispatch to the General Command for Gendarmerie, 15 Mayıs 1330 (May 28,1914), BOA, Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyeti Umumiye Müdüriyeti Evrak Odası Belgeleri (hereafter DH.EUM.VRK), 12/58.
- 139. Cipher from Ministry of Interior to Ministry of War, 18 Mayıs 1330 (May 31, 1914), BOA, DH.KMS, 22/40, Lef. 1/1; Ministry of Interior to Prime Ministry, 18 Mayıs 1330 (May 31, 1914), BEO, 321587; decision made in the cabinet on 18 Mayıs 1330 (May 31, 1914), BOA, MV. 189/12.
- 140. Writ from Ministry of Interior, n.d., BOA, HR.SYS, 2033/I, Lef. 76.
- 141. After Talat Paşa's visit to Thrace, the allegations that the local Ottoman officials began to force the local Greek populations to immigrate became rather public. An article entitled "The Greeks in the Province of Edirne" ("Edirne Vilayeti'ndeki Rumlar") that appeared in the April 28, 1914, issue of *İkdam* argued that these allegations were proved to be without any ground. *İkdam*, 15 Nisan 1330 (April 28, 1914), 1.
- 142. Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Galip Kemali Bey, the Ottoman ambassador to Athens, 3 Haziran 1914 (June 3, 1914), BOA, HR.SYS, 2033/1, Lef. 65/1.
- 143. Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Ministry of Interior, 24 Mayıs 1330 (June 6, 1914), BOA, HR.SYS, 2035/1, Lef. 19/1.
- 144. After its visit to Thrace the commission sent a report to the Grand Vezirate on 16 Haziran 1330 (June 29, 1914). See BEO, 322510; for the commission's report after its investigations in Edirne, see 16 Haziran 1330 (June 29, 1914), BOA, Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyeti Umumiye Müdüriyeti Takibat-1 Adliye Kalemi Belgeleri (hereafter DH.EUM.ADL), 47/6.
- 145. Cipher from Ali Seydi Bey, civil inspector, to Ministry of Interior, 27 Mayıs 1330 (June 9, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 429/83; cipher from Ministry of Interior to Subprovince of Çatalca, 28 Mayıs 1330 (June 10, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 41/224.
- 146. Province of Edirne to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 20 Mayıs 1330 (June 2, 1914), BOA, HR.SYS, 181/2, Lef. 18.
- 147. Telegram from Subprovince of Kale-i Sultaniye to Ministry of Interior, 15 Mayıs

- 1330 (May 28, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 428/39; telegram from Subprovince of Kale-i Sultaniye to Ministry of Interior, 16 Mayıs 1330 (May 29, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 428/46; telegram from Subprovince of Kale-i Sultaniye to Ministry of Interior, 17 Mayıs 1330 (May 30, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 428/55; telegram from Subprovince of Kale-i Sultaniye to Ministry of Interior, 5 Haziran 1330 (June 18, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 430/113; telegram from Subprovince of Kale-i Sultaniye to Ministry of Interior, 5 Haziran 1330 (June 18, 1914), BOA, DH.KMS, 23/47, Lef. 3.
- Cipher from Ministry of Interior to Hacı Adil Beyefendi, the governor of Edirne,
 Mayıs 1330 (June 7, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 429/52
- 149. The cipher dated June 11, 1914, and sent from the Ministry of Interior to the Province of Edirne made further inquiries about the director of Kumbağı, 29 Mayıs 1330 (June 11, 1914), BOA, DH.KMS, 19/59, Lef. 1/1.
- 150. Cipher from the Province of Edirne to Hacı Adil Beyefendi, the governor of Edirne, 18 Mayıs 1330 (May 31, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 428/82.
- 151. Cipher from Adil Bey, the governor of Edirne, to Ministry of Interior, 15 Haziran 1330 (June 28, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 432-3; cipher from Adil Bey, the governor of Edirne, to Ministry of Interior, 18 Haziran 1330 (July 1, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 432-51; cipher from Adil Bey, the governor of Edirne, to Ministry of Interior, 24 Haziran 1330 (July 7, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 433/3; cipher from Adil Bey, the governor of Edirne, to Ministry of Interior, 24 Haziran 1330 (July 7, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 433/2; cipher from Adil Bey, the governor of Edirne, to Ministry of Interior, 25 Haziran 1330 (July 8, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 433/18; cipher from Aziz Bey, the subgovernor of Gelibolu, to Ministry of Interior, 13 Temmuz 1330 (July 26, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 434/73.
- 152. Cipher from Ali Seydi Bey, civil inspector, to Ministry of Interior, 8 Haziran 1330 (June 21, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 431-39; telegram from civil inspector in Şarköy, 9 Haziran 1330 (June 22, 1914), BOA, DH.KMS, 19/68, Lef. 18.
- 153. Cipher from Ministry of Interior to Subprovince of Çatalca, 2 Haziran 1330 (June 15, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 42/26; cipher from Ali Seydi Bey, civil inspector, to Ministry of Interior, 24 Mayıs 1330 (June 6, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 429/33.
- 154. Cipher from Ministry of Interior to Ali Seydi Bey, the civil inspector, 21 Mayıs
 1330 (June 3, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 81/3, Lef. 3/1; cipher from Ministry of
 Interior to Subprovince of Çatalca, 27 Mayıs 1330 (June 9, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR,
 41/221; cipher from Subprovince of Çatalca to Ministry of Interior, 13 Mayıs 1330
 (May 26, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 427/119; cipher from Ali Seydi Bey, civil inspector, to Ministry of Interior, 21–22 Mayıs 1330 (June 3–4, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR
 428/122; cipher from Ali Seydi Bey, civil inspector, to Ministry of Interior, 24
 Mayıs 1330 (June 6, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 429/33; cipher from Ali Seydi Bey, civil
 inspector, to Ministry of Interior, 25 Mayıs 1330 (June 7, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR
 429/39; cipher from Ali Seydi Bey, civil inspector, to Ministry of Interior, 28 Mayıs
 1330 (June 10, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 429/100; cipher from Subprovince of Çatalca
 to Ministry of Interior, 29 Mayıs 1330 (June 11, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 429/119.
- Cipher from Subprovince of Çatalca to Ministry of Interior, 18 Haziran 1330 (July 1, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 18 Haziran 1330 (July 1, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 432/53.
- 156. Cipher from Ali Seydi Bey, civil inspector, to Ministry of Interior, 30 Mayıs 1330 (June 12, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 430/9.

- 157. Cipher from Adil Bey, the governor of Edirne, to Ministry of Interior, 15 Mayıs 1330 (May 28, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 428/31; Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior and its dispatch to General Command for Gendarmerie, 15 Mayıs 1330 (May 28, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.VRK, 12/58.
- 158. Cipher from Ali Seydi Bey, civil inspector, to Ministry of Interior, 23 Haziran 1330 (July 6, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 432/112.
- 159. Cipher from Ministry of Interior to Subprovince of Çanakkale, 15 Mayıs 1330 (May 28, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 41/104; cipher from Ministry of Interior to Subprovince of Gelibolu, 20 Mayıs 1330 (June 2, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 41/140; cipher from Ali Seydi Bey, civil inspector, to Ministry of Interior, 5 Haziran 1330 (June 18, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 430/102.
- 160. Cipher from Province of Edirne to the Governor of Edirne (who was in Istanbul at the time), 18 Mayıs 1330 (May 31, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 41/125; correspondence to the governor of Edirne, 18 Mayıs 1330 (May 31, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 428/70.
- 161. Cipher from Süleyman, the qadi of Edirne, on behalf of the governor of Edirne, to Ministry of Interior, 27 Mayıs 1330 (June 9, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 429/86.
- 162. Cipher from Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne, 27 Mayıs 1330 (June 9, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 41/211; cipher from Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne, 22 Haziran 1330 (July 5, 1914), BOA. DH.ŞFR, 41/201.
- 163. Cipher from Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne and to Subprovince of Kale-i Sultaniye, 1 Temmuz 1330 (July 14, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 43/13; cipher from Subprovince of Kale-i Sultaniye to Ministry of Interior, 2 Temmuz 1330 (July 15, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 433/91.
- 164. Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 5 Temmuz 1330 (July 18, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 433/128.
- 165. Yet at times some unofficial resettlements existed around the Dardanelles. Cipher from Subprovince of Kale-i Sultaniye to Ministry of Interior, 19 Ağustos 1330 (September 1, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 440/56.
- 166. Cipher from Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne, 9 Teşrin-i Evvel 1330 (October 22, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 46/57.
- 167. Cipher from Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 28 Eylül 1330 (October 11, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 444/15.
- 168. Cipher from Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 28 Eylül 1330 (October 11, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 444/15.
- 169. Cipher from Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne, 8 Teşrin-i Sani 1330 (November 21, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 47/112; cipher from Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne, 9 Teşrin-i Sani 1330 (November 22, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 45/115; cipher from Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne, 23 Teşrin-i Evvel 1330 (November 5, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 46/136; cipher from Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne, 23 Teşrin-i Evvel 1330 (November 5, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 46/190; cipher from Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne, 23 Teşrin-i Evvel 1330 (November 5, 1914) BOA, DH.ŞFR, 46/137.
- 170. Cipher from Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne, 20 Teşrin-i Sani 1330 (December 3, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 47/309.
- 171. Cipher from Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 21 Eylül 1330 (October 4, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 443/35; cipher from Ministry of Interior to Province

- of Edirne, 21 Eylül 1330 (October 4, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 45/180; cipher from Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 22 Eylül 1330 (October 5, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 443/52; cipher from Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne, 25 Eylül 1330 (October 8, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 45/222; cipher from Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne, 27 Eylül 1330 (October 10, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 45/227; cipher from Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 28 Eylül 1330 (October 11, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 444/15.
- 172. Cipher from Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne and to Subprovince of Kala-i Sultaniye, 23 Teşrin-i Evvel 1330 (November 5, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 46/199.
- 173. Cipher from Subprovince of Gelibolu to Ministry of Interior, 24 Teşrin-i Evvel 1330 (November 6, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 447/7
- 174. Cipher from Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne, 9 Teşrin-i Evvel 1330 (October 22, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 46/66.
- 175. Duplicate of the telegram sent by Galib Kemali Beyefendi, the Ottoman ambassador to Athens, on October 16 1914, BOA, DH.EUM.3.ŞB, 2/25; duplicate of the telegram sent by Galip Kemali Beyefendi, the Ottoman ambassador to Athens, on October 21, 1914, BOA, DH.EUM.3.ŞB, 2/28.
- 176. Cipher from Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne, 28 Teşrin-i Evvel 1330 (November 10, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 46/284; cipher from Ministry of Interior to Province of Edirne, 22 Teşrin-i Sani 1330 (November 4, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR 47/335; cipher from Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 15 Teşrin-i Sani 1330 (November 28, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 450/120; cipher from Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 23 Teşrin-i Sani 1330 (December 6, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 452/48.
- 177. McCarthy, Ölüm ve Sürgün, 176.
- 178. MMZC, İnikad 24, Celse 1, 11 Kanun-1 Evvel 1334 (December 11, 1918), 297.
- 179. Translation of the letter by Konstantin, the son of Yorgi, 20 Nisan 1330 (May 3, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 63/1, Lef. 3.
- 180. *İkdam*, 14 Nisan 1330 (April 27, 1914), no. 6171.
- 181. Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 26 Nisan 1330 (May 9, 1914), BOA, DH.KMS, 19/46, Lef. 7; Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 1 Mayıs 1330 (May 14, 1914), BOA, DH.KMS, 19/46, Lef. 10; report by Ali Seydi Bey, the civil inspector, about the Greek migrations in Edirne, 16 Haziran 1330 (June 29, 1914), BOA, Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyeti Umumiye Müdüriyeti Takibat-1 Adliye Kalemi Belgeleri 47/6; telegram from Georgios Streit, the Greek minister of foreign affairs to the Greek Embassy in Petersburg, 29 Nisan 1914 (May 12, 1914), BOA, HR.SYS, 2033/1, Lef. 29.
- 182. Mehmet Şeref Aykut, *Edirne Vilayetinden Rumlar Niçin Gitmek İstiyorlar*, 3–32.
- 183. Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Ministry of Interior, 3 Haziran 1330 (June 3, 1914), BOA, HR.SYS, 2033/1, Lef. 77.
- 184. Ministry of Interior to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 7 Haziran 1330 (June 20, 1914), BOA, HR.SYS, 2033/I, Lef. 190.
- 185. Cipher from Private Secretariat to Province of Edirne, 19 Mart 1330 (April 1, 1914), BOA, DH.ŞFR, 39/138; Ministry of Interior to Subprovince of Çatalca, 16 Nisan 1330 (April 29, 1914), BOA, DH.KMS, 19/42, Lef. 1/1.
- 186. *İkdam*, 14 Nisan 1330 (April 27, 1914)

- 187. Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 6 Haziran 1330 (June 19, 1914), BOA, DH.KMS, 19/68, Lef. 14; cipher from Zekeriya Bey, the subgovernor of Tekfurdağı, to Ministry of Interior, 10 Nisan 1330 (April 23, 1914), BOA, DH.KMS, 21/10, Lef. 2.
- 188. Statistical Report from Ministry of Interior to Inspectorate for General Security, 27 Haziran 1330 (July 10, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.EMN, 86/37, Lef. 2; in the statistics of Ali Seydi Bey, the civil inspector, the number of those who migrated from the Province of Edirne was given as 56,191, while the documents that allegedly belong to Talat Paşa fixed the number at 50,004: Murat Bardakçı, *Talat Paşa'nın Evrak-1 Metrukesi, Sadrazam Talat Paşa'nın Özel Arşivinde Bulunan Ermeni Tehciri Konusundaki Belgeler ve Hususî Yazışmalar*, 79.
- 189. The documents that allegedly belong to Talat Paşa also fixed the number of Greeks who migrated from Çatalca at 6,461: Murat Bardakçı, Talat Paşa'nın Evrak-ı Metrukesi, 79.
- 190. Population Statistics for Subprovince of Çatalca, 1332 Zilhicce 9 (October 29, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.3.Ş.B, 2/41.
- 191. Cipher from Province of Edirne to Ministry of Interior, 14 Kanun-1 Evvel 1334 (December 14, 1918), BOA, Dahiliye Nezareti Sicil-i Nüfus Tahrirat Kalemi, 82/37, Lef. 2.
- 192. The statistics of Dimetoka make it clear that 1,051 Greeks and 1,736 Bulgarians migrated or deserted from Dimetoka, 19 Haziran 1330 (July 2, 1914). These figures are exactly the same as the ones in Ali Seydi Bey's statistics. While Hayrabolu's list (DH.EUM.3.ŞB,1/2) puts the number of Greek migrants at 577, this was stated in the statistics as 570. BOA, DH.EUM.3.ŞB,1/2; the statistics prepared on 30 Mayıs 1330 (June 12, 1914) by the District of Saray note that 1,135 Greeks from the District of Saray, 783 from Yuvalı, and 122 from Kavacık: thus in all 2,040 Greeks migrated. This figure was also repeated in the statistics of Ali Seydi Bey. See the Statistics from Kaimmakamate of Saray, dated 24 Haziran 1330 (July 7, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM 3ŞB, 1/3.
- 193. Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Ministry of Interior, 24 Nisan 1330 (May 7, 1914), BOA, HR.SYS, 2033/1, Lef. 35.
- 194. Statistics from Province of Edirne on the Greeks who migrated, 19 Haziran 1330 (July 2, 1914), BOA, DH.EUM.3.\$B, 1/2.
- 195. In his correspondence dated October 23, 1914, with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the consul of Dedeağaç noted that it was impossible to transfer the Greek migrants who came to Dedeağaç with thirty to forty carriages to Greece. Ottoman consul in Dedeağaç to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, BOA, HR.SYS, 2033/1, Lef. 209.
- 196. Murat Bardakçı, *Talat Paşa'nın Evrak-ı Metrukesi*, 79.
- 197. Birgit, Halil Menteşe'nin Anıları, 165.
- 198. Bıyıklıoğlu, *Trakya'da Milli Mücadele*, 93.
- 199. Stephen P. Ladas, The Exchange of Minorities, 16.
- 200. Yannis G. Mourelos, "The 1914 Persecutions and the First Attempt at an Exchange of Minorities between Greece and Turkey," 391–92.
- 201. MMZC, İnikad 24, Celse 1, 11 Kanun-1 Evvel 1334 (December 11, 1918), 297.
- 202. For instance, see Fuat Dündar, *Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi*, 194–97; for a critical take on this study, see Ahmet Efiloğlu, "Fuat Dündar'ın, Osmanlı Belgelerinde Kaybolan "Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi," *Belleten* 74, no. 270 (August 2010): 533–40.

A Last Toehold in Europe

The Making of Turkish Thrace, 1912–1923

Ryan Gingeras

Our loss was a great one. We witnessed the cruelty of the enemy and the brutal treatment meted out to us. Those days were sad indeed. But it is in sorrow, and not in joy, that nations learn their lessons for the future.

— Ahmed Rıza Paşa

On March 26, 1914, a ceremony was held in the Ottoman border town of Edirne. Once the capital of the Ottoman Empire, Edirne was reoccupied by Ottoman troops in July 1913 after a three-month occupation by Bulgarian forces. The ceremony that day, held just outside the city's defenses, marked the one-year anniversary of the main Bulgarian assault upon Edirne's principle citadel. Aside from schoolchildren from the local government school, few locals partook in the prayer services held during this event, according to British sources. Among those who spoke that day was Ahmed Rıza Paşa, commander of the Ottoman 2nd Army Corps. Considering the suffering and sacrifices made by both the empire's soldiers and the old capital's inhabitants, Ahmed Rıza underscored that it was important to remember this great defeat and draw lessons for the future. "We Ottomans," he explained, "conquered distant lands, but now those who have been conquered are uniting to retake their lands seized from them centuries past." In light of the Ottoman reconquest of Edirne, the citizens of the empire were obliged to fulfill an important duty. "Instill into the minds of your children, your relatives, and your friends," Ahmed Riza commanded, "the sentiment of vengeance for the blood of those martyrs that has flowed on this spot." God willing, he added, this common sense of purpose would help the country to "return once more to the glory of former days."1

Ahmed Riza's words resonate strongly in the events and sentiments that defined the final years of the Ottoman Empire. The human toll that accompanied the territorial losses was felt throughout the Ottoman lands as the empire entered World War I. The government of the Committee of Union and Progress, which seized full control of the imperial administration following a coup in January 1913, appealed repeatedly to the nation's patriotism in creating what it called a "state-in-arms." After the war ended and the empire seemed destined to partition and extinction, officers and officials still loyal to the Ottoman state seethed with revenge and the desire to overthrow and expel all enemies responsible for the empire's defeat. When the Turkish War of Independence concluded in the fall of 1922, Edirne and the province of Eastern Thrace would remain firmly in Ottoman (soon to be Turkish) hands.³

Before 1912 Edirne served as a gateway between the capital and the wider imperial hinterland in the Balkans. Exactly one hundred years later, in the aftermath of the Ottoman Empire transformation into the Turkish Republic, the lands lying between the Maritsa River and the Bosphorus are all that remains of the empire's "European" holdings. Eastern Thrace is now an integral component of the Republic of Turkey (while other former territories remain in foreign hands), which raises the question of how it came to be included within the Turkish nation—state. Superficially the answer seems obvious. Considering how this region became the focal point of conflict involving the Ottoman Empire, Russia, and the empire's Balkan neighbors, it seems intuitive that war (in terms of the agreements that it produces as well as its casualties) manufactured the demographic and political realities that led to Eastern Thrace's eventual inclusion in the Turkish Republic. Upon closer inspection the answer is not so simple.

This brief survey of the history of Eastern Thrace between 1912 and 1923 takes specific interest in local politics and communal violence in the region during this decade-long period of conflict. Warfare certainly shaped the demographic, economic, and political contours of Eastern Thrace during this period of transition between empire and nation-state. Armies advancing and retreating across the Thracian plain finalized the border that divides present-day Turkey from neighboring Greece and Bulgaria. The violence wreaked by these armies also helped to determine the social and ethnic character of the region by directly and indirectly instigating civilians to take flight and seek exile elsewhere. An even more profound source of social and political change in Eastern Thrace was the threat and prospect of violence and war. An intense and multifaceted regime of social, economic, and demographic reengineering, largely

enacted by the Ottoman government, lies at the heart of Eastern Thrace's evolution into a modern-day Turkish province. Despite the collapse of Ottoman authority and the threat of Greek succession after 1918, Eastern Thrace's transformation into a largely Muslim and Turkish-speaking territory during World War I cemented the region's national bonds to the rest of Anatolia. This particular aspect of the province's transformation was not the result of occupying or rampaging soldiers but of civilian officials and security personnel tasked with ridding the region of supposed sources of sedition and rebellion.

In thinking comparatively of the "Turkification" of Eastern Thrace, it is important to recognize that both local and external factors inspired Ottoman population politics in this portion of the empire's periphery. On the one hand, Istanbul's efforts to alter Eastern Thrace's demographic landscape were influenced by similarly uncompromising and often brutal policies being enacted across the province's western border. It is clear that the violence and displacement experienced by Muslims, Christians, and Jews living across the Maritsa River in Western Thrace (as well as former Ottoman subjects living further afield in Macedonia) particularly impacted the way in which Ottoman officials perceived the loyalties of the peoples still residing within the empire's Thracian domain. On the other hand, Istanbul (and later Ankara) employed certain measures and policies in Eastern Thrace that were uniformly implemented across Anatolia throughout the war years. In regions across the empire Ottoman and Turkish officials particularly targeted Armenians, Orthodox Christians, and specific groups of Muslim refugees (Albanians and Bosnians) for mass removal and relocation. In this aspect of Eastern Thrace's history we see evidence of an empire-wide paranoia toward specifically "problematic" peoples and groups.

While this chapter provides a very provincial view of Ottoman history, the significance of Eastern Thrace within the making of modern Turkey is profound. Eastern Thrace, literally and figuratively, represented the front lines of the CUP nation-making project. In Eastern Thrace we find many of the ingredients that inspired the core of the CUP leadership to embark upon a radical plan of reconstructing rural and urban Ottoman society for the sake of saving the empire. As a region rooted in the Ottoman struggle over retaining the Balkans, Eastern Thrace was at the center of Ottoman geostrategic and security concerns as the empire entered the twentieth century. As a region riven with sectarian and ethnic divisions, Thrace shared many of the social rifts that vexed CUP administrators seeking to forge a unified nation. Perhaps of greatest importance,

holding onto the lands of Edirne, one of the cornerstones of the Ottoman past, represented an existential imperative that imperial officers and their republican successors were willing to fight for at all costs. In securing Eastern Thrace, they used many of the methods, including mass deportations, forced settlements, paramilitary violence, and conspiratorial politics, that figured so prominently and universally in the transformation of Anatolia into the Turkish nation-state.

EASTERN THRACE AND THE WRITING OF PROVINCIAL WARTIME HISTORY

In some regards the writing of provincial history ranks among the most conspicuous topics within Turkish historiography. While many elements of provincial social Turkish history may remain underdeveloped or unexplored (such as local labor movements, gender and ethnic studies, as well as provincial politics, to name a few), regional Turkish studies are especially strong in the case of the so-called Turkish National Movement (Milli Mücadele). A diverse array of studies on towns and regions such as Istanbul, Konya, Trabzon, İzmir, İzmit, Antep, Zonguldak, and Samsun may be found in established research libraries in North America, Europe, and Turkey.⁴ Although many of these titles confine themselves to an exploration of the years between 1918 and 1922, events and issues during or before World War I often are included in the narrative of how these select areas participated in the Turkish War of Independence and the rise of Mustafa Kemal. Two particular works on Eastern Thrace especially reflect this trend in dealing with both the specific and broader historical context of the Turkish National Movement. Tevfik Bıyıklıoğlu's The National Movement in Thrace (Trakya'da Milli Müdadele) provides both a long introduction on the wars and political wrangling that defined Thrace before 1918 and a rigorous account of the figures, events, agreements, and movements that constituted the course of the Turkish War of Independence in Thrace.⁵ An even more detailed, yet still expansive, approach is found in V. Türkan Doğruöz's treatment of the history of Kırkkilesi (now known as Kırklareli). While her study is largely restricted to the history of this small border town between 1918 and 1922, Doğruöz nonetheless offers important insights into how events before and during World War I shaped Kırklareli and Eastern Thrace at large.⁶

Despite the attention and affection that scholars have shown toward Eastern Thrace and other portions of contemporary Turkey during this seminal period, the general body of works dealing with provincial history

in Turkey (particularly those produced by Turkish-language scholars) has a number of shortcomings and limitations. Provincial history in Turkey remains by and large the story of "Muslims and Turks." The protagonists of this history are overwhelmingly pro-Kemalist (or at the very least Muslim Ottoman) officials, soldiers, intellectuals, activists, and other notables. Religious and ethnic "minorities," by contrast, tend to be treated in a supporting capacity and as groups (instead of as individuals). The bulk of Turkish-language scholarship on the provinces almost uniformly portrays Ottoman Christians during the Turkish War of Independence (as well as World War I) as antagonists and promoters of violence and atrocities. Foreigners, be they diplomats, soldiers, missionaries or aid workers, in the provincial context also tend to be depicted in an overtly negative light as the promoters of partition and rebellion in what remained of the Ottoman Empire. In keeping with the orthodoxies of Kemalism, dissident views on Mustafa Kemal's National Movement (and to some degree the Committee of Union and Progress in general) are dismissively represented as reactionary or as the instruments of foreign subversion. All in all, while provincial accounts of the Turkish War of Independence may differ in terms of the local events and characters featured within their respective narratives, these and other dogmas that typify the writing of regional histories in Turkey share virtually the same narrative arc. Turkey was a nation humbled by war and sedition in 1918. With the Greek landing at İzmir and the impending partition of what remained of the Ottoman state, the nation's true heroes sprang into action, led by Mustafa Kemal. Against all odds, and at great cost, the soldiers, leaders, and civilians loyal to Mustafa Kemal vanquished the nation's enemies and expelled all antagonists, both foreign and domestic, who sought the empire's demise.

One last crucial, but implicit, premise is found in virtually all of the provincial studies of Turkey during World War I and the National Movement. Whether dealing with Istanbul, Antep, Aydın, Trabzon, or points in between, the reader is left with no doubt as to the territorial integrity of the lands that formed the nascent Turkish state. The trials and tribulations that led to the inclusion of Zonguldak, İzmir, Van, and Samsun in the Republic of Turkey represent a natural and just course of events; each territory claimed by the National Movement is Turkish land tried and true.

Eastern Thrace certainly is no exception to this implicit understanding of Turkey's formation. But key studies of Eastern Thrace offer a unique twist to this thesis. In addition to surveying the events that marked Eastern Thrace's incorporation into the Republic of Turkey, scholars such as Tevfik Bıyıklıoğlu, V. Türkan Doğruöz, and Zekai Güner pay particular attention to pro-Ottoman/Turkish forces in Greek and Bulgarian—occupied Western Thrace as well. The collective narrative found in the works of these scholars suggests that Bulgaria and Greece brutally denied Turkey's just claim to Western Thrace and that Mustafa Kemal's Nationalist government abandoned the region to Greek rule very reluctantly with the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923. Nevertheless, the heroism of those fighters and activists who staunchly defended the rights of Muslims in Western Thrace deserves, in their view, the attention and admiration of those who succeeded in securing Turkey's claim to Eastern Thrace.

The vague irredentist tendencies found within the historiography of wartime Western and Eastern Thrace raise an important question: if Western Thrace's inclusion in Turkey represents a definitive case of justice denied or deferred, could we make similar assertions about other portions of the Ottoman realm not included in the Republic of Turkey? To put it another way, if Western Thrace is naturally Turkish (but now Greek by circumstance), can we make the same case for Mosul, Solanika, Skopje, or Batum? Moreover, if we similarly visit the "counter-nationalist" claims that emerged during this period in Ottoman history, what makes İzmir, Van, Antep, or Edirne undeniably Turkish?

More generalized scholarly studies of the end of the Ottoman Empire offer some interesting answers and approaches to these questions. Contemporary works on the formation of modern eastern Anatolia collectively posit that Turkish claims to this region are premised upon nineteenth-century Ottoman efforts to consolidate control over this long-neglected portion of the Ottoman periphery. In the aftermath of Mahmud II's assertion of unitary rule over the empire the autonomy of local notables and powerbrokers in the region (principally tribal chiefs) was whittled down and gradually replaced by a regular bureaucracy and military commanders. Ottoman administrators earnestly endeavored throughout the nineteenth century to settle tribes and incorporate loyal clan leaders into the ranks of the state. By the reign of Abdülhamid II (1876-1909) Sunni Muslim factions in eastern Anatolia (particularly a select group of Kurdish tribes) increasingly received greater support and attention from the central government in order to offset the apparent rise of Armenian nationalist agitation. Escalating fears of Armenian secession, coupled with the desire to accommodate large numbers of Muslim refugees and to secure "national" (i.e., Muslim) economic interests,

eventually led to the mass removal and slaughter of large numbers of Armenian and other Christians during the course of World War I. The near-total annihilation of the empire's non-Muslim citizens in eastern Anatolia did not relieve Kurds from similar acts of governmental intervention and brutality. Ottoman administrators in the early twentieth century hoped to "civilize" and discipline both loyal and recalcitrant Kurds out of fear that they too could threaten the integrity of the state (leading to comparable policies of deportation and massacre).⁷

An especially important factor in instituting late nineteenth and early twentieth century Ottoman policies toward eastern Anatolia, in the words of Michael Reynolds, was "a sober vision grounded in concrete geopolitical reasoning" about the empire's border with Russia. While the Ottoman Empire did assert territorial claims over portions of the Russian Caucasus (particularly Batum, Kars, and Ardahan) and did invade and occupy portions of Azerbaijan during the waning months of World War I, CUP strategists primarily hoped to solidify and reinforce the empire's far eastern border through management of the region's populations and the creation of "buffer states" that would insulate the Ottoman lands from future Russian invasions.9

The history of Eastern Thrace does bear some resemblance to events and experiences in eastern Anatolia. Between 1912 and 1923 Eastern Thrace was a battleground between the Ottoman Empire and competing states with irredentist designs (Greece and Bulgarian). Istanbul had similar concerns toward restive elements of Thrace's Christian population and concomitantly sought to strengthen the political and economic standing of Sunni Muslims in the province. In the grand scheme of things geostrategic prerogatives (versus simply an uncompromising nationalist doctrine) also lay at the core of CUP and early Kemalist policies in Eastern Thrace throughout the war years.

Yet in relating the history of Eastern Thrace we must also remember the uniqueness of this corner of the late Ottoman and early Turkish state. An established frontier delineating Eastern Anatolia from its neighbors had been in existence since the mid-sixteenth century. The experiences of war and rebellion along this borderland of the Ottoman state infused Istanbul with the desire to retain this territory (and its peoples) and transform the frontier into a hardened, indelible border. The border that bisected Thrace, by contrast, was newly imposed in the early twentieth century. Before 1912 Thrace lay at the core (as opposed to the periphery) of the Ottoman state. While the region certainly possessed "unruly" elements, Thrace's population was fairly well integrated into the workings

of the Ottoman state and its economy. In other words Eastern Thrace was in no way "oriental" in the early twentieth century. The Maritsa River became the empire's westernmost periphery, which represented a very different kind of existential challenge for Ottoman (and later Turkish) administrators and officers alike.

DEFINING EASTERN THRACE, 1903 TO 1913

To appreciate the full evolution of Thrace into a physically and ethnically partitioned territory straddling three countries, we must first briefly survey the demographic diversity of the various districts of this province at the turn of the century. Edirne's diversity mirrored the confessional, linguistic, and ethnic trends of the southern Balkans as a whole. While it is difficult to ascertain the numeric proportions fully, it is clear that five constituent groups defined the sociopolitical culture of the province: Muslims, Greeks, Bulgarians, Armenians, and Jews. Statistical data collected in the Ottoman census of 1906/7 demonstrate that Muslims held a sizable majority across Thrace (including both the eastern and western halves). In five of the six counties (Edirne, Gümülcine, Dedeağaç, Tekirdağ, and Kırıkkilise) in the province Muslims constituted the plural majority of the population.¹⁰ Nevertheless, the overwhelming size of the Greek, Bulgarian, Armenian, and Jewish communities found across the region fundamentally undermines any claim that Thrace was an essentially "Muslim" province.11

Muslims and non-Muslims cannot easily be described along class or vocational lines. Anecdotal evidence suggests that each of the groups outlined above numbered among the province's peasantry. Muslims, Greeks, Armenians, Bulgarians, and Jews could also be found among the ranks of Thrace's administrators, merchants, and landowners.

The Russo-Ottoman War of 1877–78 set the tone for the modern history of Thrace. With the collapse of Ottoman forces along the Danube, Russian troops stormed eastward along Thrace's central plain. Although the Ottoman capitulation at San Stefano in March 1878 prevented a Russian occupation of the capital, the ensuing peace treaties (both San Stefano and Berlin) transformed Thrace from a province within the Ottoman heartland into the empire's westernmost border.

The establishment of a disaffected Bulgarian state allied with Russia just north of Thrace (and within easy reach of Istanbul) militarized the administration, and the culture, of the region. Although the province possessed a long and storied military history, Bulgaria's secession from

	Muslims	Greeks	Armenians	Bulgarians	Jews	Total
Edirne	153,893	103,258	4,899	36,783	15,534	314,367
Gümülcine	239,870	21,545	493	28,614	1,290	291,812
Kırkkilise	78,338	70,501	149	29,736	1,699	180,423
Dedeağaç	43,735	27,573	456	16,923	326	89,013
Tekirdağ	76,813	53,427	19,014	5,746	2,654	157,654
Gelibolu	25,955	64,604	1,133	1,674	2,336	95,702
Total	618,604	340,908	26,144	119,476	23,839	1,128,971

Table 14.1 Ottoman Population Statistics for the Vilayet of Edirne, 1914

Source: Karpat, Ottoman Population, 170-71.

the empire, coupled with the mounting influence of Greek nationalism and irredentism, strained Thrace's various confessional and ethnic communities.¹²

Among the emblematic events signaling a dramatic turn in communal relations in Thrace was the outbreak of the so-called Ilinden Uprising in the summer of 1903. Although the main thrust of the rebellion was largely confined to the nearby province of Manastir, Thrace was the scene of dramatic attacks by bands of fighters organized by the Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (often referred to as the IMRO).¹³ As an organization seeking to liberate both Macedonia and Thrace from Ottoman rule and stem the tide of Greek influence in the region, the IMRO's campaign that summer targeted Muslims and Greek Orthodox civilians in various corners of Thrace (most notably in Dedeagaç and Kırkkilesi).¹⁴ Communal violence between Bulgarian and Greek Orthodox Christians continued to escalate despite the failure of the IMRO's Ilinden offensive. Like districts in the neighboring Macedonian provinces of Solanika and Manastir, violence between rival guerrilla bands persisted in Thrace for another four years. 15 After Ilinden the intercommunal violence that spanned the years between 1903 and 1908 resulted in more than just physical destruction. Sectarian violence in Thrace and neighboring Macedonia also led to the displacement of tens of thousands from their homes. The flight of thousands of Exarchist Christians from Thrace and Macedonia to Bulgaria coincided with similarly steady flow of Muslim refugees fleeing Bulgaria (particularly in the aftermath of Bulgaria's declaration of independence in 1908).16

The Young Turk Revolution of July 1908 appeared to bring some calm to Thrace's sectarian tensions.¹⁷ Within a few months of the reinstatement of the constitution CUP loyalists assumed a position of dominance

within the region's administration and the upper ranks of the officer corps. 18 Thrace soon became the home of several of the most prominent figures associated with the Committee of Union and Progress, such as Mehmed Talat and Hacı Adil. 19 The elections of 1908 and 1912 would further entrench the CUP's deep roots in the region. Nevertheless, according to British reports from both before and after World War I, the CUP's hold over Thrace did not pass completely uncontested. Dissent, later organized under the auspices of the İtilaf Fırkası (Entente Party), manifested itself among some members of the *alayı* (nonacademy) officers as well as elements of the ulema and the local gentry. 20 Tensions between the CUP and the Entente Party, for example, led to violence in the environs of Gümülcine before 1912. Local authorities, however, intervened on behalf of individuals purportedly assaulted by members of the CUP in Gümülcine. The attack did not dissuade voters from electing an Entente representative to the parliament. 21

As in the rest of the Ottoman Balkans, the outbreak of war in November 1912 shattered the sociopolitical order of the province of Thrace. Reports from the German consulate in Tekirdağ (Rodosto) provide stark insights into the devastating effect that the Bulgarian advance would have upon previously tranquil and prosperous portions of the region. After a brief clash outside of town (which included apparently indiscriminate shelling from Ottoman cruisers stationed in the Sea of Marmara) Bulgarian troops entered the city with little resistance from the population. The commanding officer of the Bulgarian occupation wasted little time in imposing rigid control over the administration of the town.²² An Ottoman counterattack, coinciding with the outbreak of the Second Balkan War, evicted the Bulgarians eight months later. Violent acts of retribution followed the reimposition of Ottoman rule over Tekirdağ. Muslim refugees driven from their homes in both Thrace and Macedonia targeted native Christians, including both Greek Orthodox Christians and Armenians. Ottoman administrators openly accused local Christians of seizing the property of expelled Muslims in connivance with the Bulgarian occupation. Thousands of Tekirdağ's Christian residents (including native Bulgarians, Greeks, and Armenians) were forced to flee for their lives.²³

Examples of violence and mass displacement of civilians (both Muslims and non-Muslims) abound throughout Thrace during the course of the Balkan Wars. Foreign and Ottoman observers noted atrocities committed by Bulgarian, and Serb, troops in multiple corners of the province.²⁴ Even with the partition of Thrace into eastern and western halves, repeated acts of Bulgarian oppression continued to impact the lives and perceptions of those who remained under Ottoman rule in Eastern

Thrace. Refugees from Western Thrace streamed into Ottoman territory even after the end of the Second Balkan War. Ottoman officials and officers were no doubt aware of the mass arrests, beatings, thefts, and forced Christian conversion of the inhabitants of the former Ottoman Thracian districts of Dedeağaç and Gümülcine.²⁵ Further compounding Ottoman impressions of the fallout of the war in Thrace were the accounts of refugees fleeing portions of Greek- and Serb-occupied Macedonia, where equally brutal acts of ethnic cleansing occurred.²⁶

The impact of the Balkan War upon both the Ottoman state and society cannot be exaggerated. Even with the return of Edirne to Ottoman rule, the loss of Macedonia and Albania's declaration of independence wounded the CUP leadership deeply and fundamentally altered CUP perceptions of the empire as a state and nation.²⁷ The seemingly incessant flow of Muslim refugees into the Eastern Thrace and Anatolia helped to perpetuate the anguish of the conflict even after the outbreak of World War I. Ottoman reports, particularly those recently recovered from interior minister Talat Paşa's "lost papers," affirm that the total number of refugees that arrived into what remained of the Ottoman Empire numbered in the hundreds of thousands.²⁸ Talat Paşa's personal records further demonstrate the attention with which state authorities counted, resettled, and cared for these displaced Ottoman citizens.²⁹

While the Treaty of Constantinople (September 1913) may have formally upheld Istanbul's claims to Edirne and the eastern half of Thrace, deep-seated strategic and ideological priorities compelled the inner circle of the CUP to remain on a war footing against Bulgaria and Greece. Retaining Edirne, in the words of Cemal Paşa, was key to the defense of Istanbul and was therefore "a life and death matter." Yet maintaining Ottoman control over Edirne could not be sustained without the reconquest and retention of Western Thrace. As Cemal put it to his British counterpart in the aftermath of the Balkan Wars, liberating the Muslims of Western Thrace (who constituted the majority of the region's population in Cemal's estimation) represented a "sacred duty." ³¹

Fears of a future conflict with Greece forced Bulgaria to conclude a separate treaty with Istanbul following the Balkan Wars (an agreement containing language that upheld a great deal of autonomy for Muslims in Western Thrace and the possibility of future Bulgarian land concessions in Thrace and the Rhodope mountains).³² Nevertheless, Bulgarian acts of oppression in Western Thrace compelled the CUP to remain skeptical of Sofia's promises.³³

Fighting went on in Western Thrace in spite of the peace signed between Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire. With permission from minister of war Enver Paşa a cohort of trusted CUP paramilitary leaders commanded by Süleyman Askeri and Kuşçubaşı Eşref formed an army of irregular troops in the hopes of continuing the struggle against the occupation of Thrace through clandestine means such as raids and ambushes against Greek and Bulgarian military and civilian targets during World War I and the postarmistice era. The failed establishment of a "Turkish Republic of Western Thrace," and even the cooperation of some elements of the Bulgarian military, did little to undo the Bulgarian administration or halt the region's eventual transfer to Greek suzerainty.³⁴

Diplomatic maneuvering and armed subterfuge were not the only means employed in the Ottoman struggle to reunite Thrace. The lessons of the Balkan Wars and their aftermath inspired CUP administrators and officers to take direct, brutal, and radical action in order to maintain the empire's last sliver of Balkan territory. The empire's leaders believed that Eastern Thrace, as well as large swaths of eastern Anatolia, could not be held by force of arms alone; a successful defense of the empire could only be undertaken with the transformation of Ottoman provincial society.

TRANSFORMING EASTERN THRACE, 1913 TO 1918

The human toll of the Balkan Wars left Eastern Thrace with little time and few resources to rebuild and recover from the fighting. Whole villages lying to the west of Istanbul's main defenses along the Çatalca lines were still in ruins by the summer of 1914. Though the war. Eastern Thrace during and after the war. Edirne's transformation into a border town neighboring hostile territory, coupled with the destruction wrought by the war, undermined trade and economic productivity. Agricultural activity stagnated as peasants slowly began to return to sowing their fields in the spring of 1914. Communal tensions between returning Muslim refugees and local Christians who remained in their homes throughout the war remained high in Gelibolu, Tekirdağ, Edirne, and Kırkkilesi.

Settling and accommodating the immense number of Muslim refugees arguably represented the greatest challenge confronting administrators and inhabitants of Eastern Thrace.³⁹ The hundreds of thousands of Muslim refugees who settled in or made their way through Eastern Thrace between 1913 and 1918 by no means formed a monolithic bloc. Statistics and anecdotes gathered by Ottoman authorities, including those found in the possession of Talat Paşa, suggest that the majority of

refugees came from the Macedonian interior. Other accounts also suggest that a significant percentage of the displaced Muslims in Thrace were local residents forced to flee by the Bulgarian onslaughts of 1912 and 1913. Other refugees numbering in the thousands arrived from lands just across the Bulgarian frontier.⁴⁰

Many Macedonian refugees simply passed through Thrace (by foot, rail, and ship) for points farther east. One manifest of refugees departing Solanika, for example, suggests that many Macedonian evacuees hoped to disembark in Istanbul, while some planned eventually to settle in a host of Anatolian cities (including İzmir, Erzurum, Bursa, and elsewhere). Others, it appears, simply stayed or were forcibly settled in Thrace by Ottoman authorities. Internal correspondence and Western consular reports and news dispatches also emphasize the ethnic disparities among the refugees. Large numbers of refugees spoke Turkish. Mixed among these Turkish refugees were especially large numbers of Albanians, Bosnians, and Pomaks. 42

While displaced Muslims in Thrace and elsewhere no doubt experienced poverty in the aftermath of the conflict, the postwar plight of these refugees obscures the broad class dynamics found among this segment of Ottoman society. In addition to merchants, bureaucrats, army officers, landowners, and professionals, a variety of cultivators (most notably of tobacco) and pastoralists represented the bulk of Thrace's refugee population. It is also critical to note, as Erik J. Zürcher reminds us, that many of the most powerful and influential figures in the CUP numbered among the displaced. Men of stature such as Talat, Hacı Adil, Faik Kaltakkıran, and Emrullah Efendi should certainly be counted among the hundreds of thousands who shared in the experience of displacement from the war.

As the new minister of the interior, Talat Paşa took a personal interest in the refugee crisis gripping Thrace. In addition to the data that he personally collected on the state of Muslim migrants in the region, he undertook at least one tour of the region once the fighting was over. His personal involvement in settling and caring for displaced Muslims occurred precisely when the CUP, as both a party and a governing institution, began to contemplate the political, social, and economic implications of Anatolia's demographic complexity. Studies conducted by Fuat Dündar and Uğur Ümit Üngör convincingly demonstrate the degree to which the CUP investigated and analyzed the population structure of Ottoman Anatolia. With the crafting of census data, anthropological surveys, and maps the Young Turk regime clearly fashioned a

comprehensive framework with which to reengineer the demographic makeup of the Anatolian (and to some degree Syrian) landscape. ⁴⁶ The broader strategic objectives outlined for Anatolia (particularly the eastern borderlands) melded into the already evolving demographic changes taking place in Thrace. From the closing stages of the Balkan Wars well into the final years of World War I CUP administrators both deliberately took advantages of the shifting tides of peoples and abruptly contrived a program of forced migration.

CUP perceptions of the imperial economy figured prominently in the party's desire to reengineer the Ottoman Anatolian core of the state demographically. From the perspective of the CUP, "saving the state" from external and internal threats necessitated more invasive and protectionist policies in order to ensure the economic sovereignty of the empire. In addition to such measures as addressing the national banking sector and internal trade, Istanbul utilized the mass displacement and resettlement of large segments of the population to reconfigure the cultural and ethnic character of the economy at both provincial and imperial levels. As Istanbul entered World War I, increasingly abundant amounts of "abandoned property" (emval-i metruke) belonging to dead, exiled, and emigrant non-Muslims allowed for the mass redistribution of wealth into Muslim hands. Current scholarship suggests that this transfer of wealth and space from non-Muslims and Muslims occurred both by accident and by design. While the seemingly ceaseless flow of Muslim refugees compelled officials to seek out all available land and material for their resettlement, it is clear that the CUP government undertook the mass displacement (and physical liquidation) of large portions of the Ottoman Christian citizenry with the intention of permanently transferring critical elements of the provincial and imperial economy into the hands of Muslim entrepreneurs and proprietors.⁴⁷

The sudden pullback of Bulgarian forces in mid-1913 precipitated an equally cataclysmic departure of Bulgarian civilians from various corners of Eastern Thrace. Attacking Ottoman troops, as well returning refugees, put thousands of Bulgarian inhabitants to flight as Istanbul resumed control over Tekirdağ and Kırkkilesi. Per the stipulations of the Treaty of Constantinople, both Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire agreed to an exchange of populations along a fifteen-kilometer buffer zone on either side of the new border. Subsequent reports, however, suggest that Hacı Adil, governor of Edirne, used the opportunity completely to evict Eastern Thrace's Bulgarian population. Py 1918 virtually no Bulgarians were left within the confines of what remained of Ottoman Thrace.

Istanbul and Athens also contemplated a similar exchange of populations with the arrival of spring in 1914. After initially agreeing in principle, both states officially abandoned any implementation of the accord at the outbreak of World War I.51 The lack of a formal agreement did not discourage Young Turk operatives in Eastern Thrace and Anatolia from enacting a population transfer unilaterally. As early as January 1914 an internal consensus had been reached within the inner circle of the CUP leadership on the liquidation of non-Muslims along the Aegean coast.⁵² By spring consular dispatches from Edirne and Tekirdağ reported systematic attacks upon Greek villages in Thrace and elsewhere by armed gangs (as well as members of the provincial gendarmerie). Greeks along the Sea of Marmara, as well in the environs of Vize, Malkara, and Kırkkilesi, appear to have been particularly affected.⁵³ The implementation of a boycott of non-Muslim businesses and shops (a campaign clandestinely supported by the CUP) gave further impetus for Greeks to flee (although British reports from that spring suggest that local Muslim shoppers in Edirne were less than cooperative in upholding the boycott).54 From the perspective of the German consul in Tekirdağ, the violence toward Greeks in the countryside, as well as the streams of refugees departing from the port, gave the impression that "a real reign of terror and anarchy" pervaded the province. Local administrators, according to German sources, pretended "not be aware of the scene unfolding across the region."55

A British observer writing from Edirne in March 1914 saw this campaign as having a twofold object:

It is clear that the government has recently adopted the policy of establishing in this Vilayet a population as far as possible purely Moslem. The object appears to be twofold. Firstly by the creation of an overwhelming Moslem majority of the population to nullify claims which might ultimately be put forward by any of the neighbouring nations to this Vilayet on ethnological grounds, and secondly the securing of the lines of communication in any future military operations by the substitution of a friendly Moslem population for the Christian element whose hostile disposition in the event of war must have been a constant source of anxiety to a Turkish Commander-in-Chief in the past. ⁵⁶

While the mass flight of Greek citizens was never denied by the government, it does not appear that the Committee of Union and Progress

ever officially claimed responsibility for the disaster.⁵⁷ An article published after the war in *Tasvir-i Efkar* posited that most Greeks left the Ottoman Empire of their own volition in the hopes of joining the Greek army during and after the Balkan Wars.⁵⁸

As tens of thousands of Ottoman Greeks escaped Eastern Thrace, CUP administrators in the province assumed a similarly critical perspective on many newly arriving Muslim refugees. A handful of Ottoman and foreign reports suggest that the CUP imposed new constraints upon migrants arriving from the Balkans in advance of World War I. Rather than allow displaced Muslims to settle where they pleased (or where space and resources were available), CUP security and Interior Ministry officials took great pains to screen and relocate arriving individuals and families in accordance with their ethnicity. Albanians arriving and living in Eastern Thrace were among the principal groups to receive such attention. According to one British consular report, Albanians living in Vize were subject to deportation after a series of incidents of highway robbery and livestock theft. Officials eventually extended the order to Albanians living in the whole province of Edirne (including longtime residents).⁵⁹ Restrictions on Albanian settlements grew even more stringent after the outbreak of World War I. By 1917 Albanians were categorically forbidden from settling in Edirne. 60 Such prohibitions were not applied uniformly to all "non-Turks." While similar wartime restrictions were placed upon newly arriving refugees from Bosnia, the Ottoman Interior Ministry sought out Syrian Arabs and Anatolian Kurds (as well as Turks from various points) to settle in Eastern Thrace.⁶¹

The year 1915 represents the absolute height of the CUP's interventionist policies in regard to Eastern Thrace's population. With the British and French naval assault upon the Dardanelles Strait, which was soon followed by the landing of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps upon the beaches of Gelibolu, a new wave of deportations of Greek civilians commenced in the province. Initial orders sent in secret stipulated that Greeks living in the environs of Gelibolu had to be resettled farther south in the province of Karesi in locations situated "an hour from the coast line." The numbers and locations of Greeks targeted for deportation grew over the next two years. Some Greeks, it appears, were relocated to the interior of the province of Edirne (such as Malkara and Uzunköprü). Others were sent inland into Anatolia. Regardless of their final place of exile, Greeks left behind thousands of abandoned homes and an untold fortune in movable property and capital goods.

Forced deportations in Eastern Thrace continued even as the Allied Gallipoli campaign began to wind down during the fall of 1915. In late

October Armenians throughout the province of Edirne were officially instructed to prepare for deportation, with little time to pack or make arrangements for belongings left behind. It is interesting to note, as Raymond Kevorkian documents, that the eviction of the vast majority of the province's Armenian population occurred many months after Istanbul ordered an empire-wide transfer of Armenians to northern Syria (the sole exception being the Armenians of the Gelibolu peninsula, who were removed alongside their Greek neighbors at the height of the Allied assault).65 A variety of fates befell the Armenians from Eastern Thrace after the October declaration. Many did indeed complete the trek to the province of Der Zor or perhaps were relocated at points along the way (such as Konya). 66 Others escaped westward across the border to Bulgaria. 67 Few, it appears, returned to Eastern Thrace after the abrogation of the deportation orders in the fall of 1918. The exact death toll (and the exact cause of death) is impossible to discern in the case of Armenians from Eastern Thrace. Nevertheless, like the deported Greeks, Armenians left behind thousands of houses and an immense amount of personal wealth.⁶⁸

Among Talat Paşa's so-called lost papers, for example, no single document offers an estimate of Armenians deported from the province of Edirne (although ancillary undated documents do reference the presence of deported Armenians from Thrace residing outside of the province). In the case of settled Muslim migrants dwelling in the province Talat Paşa's papers provide statistical data for the years between 1912 and 1914. ⁶⁹ But they contain no apparent breakdown of the ethnic makeup of Eastern Thrace's Muslim refugee population. The lack of documentation in both of these regards (as well with respect to other population movements in Eastern Thrace) does not mean that such data were not kept or sought. Internal Ottoman correspondence as well as Talat Paşa's own records suggest that the Interior Ministry was sensitive in maintaining up-to-date figures on the movement of various peoples. ⁷⁰

In considering the context of World War I it is tempting to draw direct parallels between the policies and politics that defined how and why Bulgarians, Greeks, Albanians, and Armenians were evicted from Eastern Thrace. Each group, in the CUP's estimation, represented an elemental threat to the stability and security of the province of Edirne. Bulgaria's bloody offensive and occupation of the region tainted not only native Bulgarians. In the minds of both local Muslim inhabitants and CUP authorities in the capital the charge of collaboration with the empire's enemies could also be extended to Greeks and Armenians. Suspicions that Thrace's native Greeks funded Greece's war against the Ottoman Empire (as well as the prospect of Orthodox Christians fleeing the region to

defect to armies of the enemy) further fueled Istanbul's desire to diminish the province's Greek population. The supposed Albanian propensity for theft and violence (an indictment commonly associated with Muslim Albanians both in their native environment and in exile) similarly condemned this segment of Thrace's Muslim population to be removed.⁷²

The commonalities in the treatment of these groups should not obscure important exceptions and contradictions differentiating these cases. While the mass removal of Bulgarians appears to have taken place partly in the context of the Bulgarian armies' retreat (and in some respects because of the Treaty of Constantinople), the deportation of Greeks, Armenians, and Albanians was a result of direct CUP planning and execution. Only part of this planning appears to have occurred locally (as a result of the attack on Gelibolu or as a result of the post–Balkan War tensions). In the case of Greeks and particularly Armenians much of the planning and implementation of the deportations appears to conform to actions undertaken in Ottoman Anatolia. Measured acts of terror and violence (committed by both regular and irregular elements of the government) were often critical features of the imposed exile of Armenians and Greeks from Eastern Thrace.

The most crucial question is what the CUP attempted to achieve through each of these acts of forced migration. The patterns and timing of the various deportations outlined above suggest that the movement of peoples (forced or otherwise) was not purely incidental to either the Balkan Wars or the Great War. Istanbul's approach to the demography of Eastern Thrace appears to be undeniably systemic. But to what end?

On the one hand, it is clear that geostrategic interests continued to figure prominently in CUP policies toward Eastern Thrace. German reports from the latter years of the war illustrate Istanbul's hope that Eastern and Western Thrace could be united following the end of the conflict. The premise of this unification, according to these reports, was rooted in the overwhelmingly Muslim character of Western Thrace.⁷³ If we follow this logic along its natural course, the deportations helped to augment the size of Eastern Thrace's Muslim population and limit the prospective dangers posed by Greek, Armenian, or Bulgarian resistance or dissent in the region.

On the other hand, Eastern Thrace, along with the rest of Ottoman Anatolia, was included in a grander CUP plan to refashion the empire's demography. Reengineering the sociopolitical makeup of the province of Edirne clearly entailed breaking up strong or dense pockets of "minorities" (be they Muslim or non-Muslim) in the hopes of eliminating the

threat of sedition and rebellion. Adding to the stress of reconfiguring the demography of Eastern Thrace (as well as the empire at large) was the immediate pressure brought on by the arrival of refugees from the Balkans. They too had to be sorted and resettled (again with an eye toward not allowing certain refugees, such as Bosnians or Albanians, to congregate together).

The decimation of Eastern Thrace's non-Muslim population compensated for the resettlement of Muslim migrants in two ways. First, it made space and land available to Muslim refugees within a short distance of their point of entry. Second, the CUP's ability to seize and redistribute property abandoned by non-Muslims provided a ready-made means for housing and employing displaced Muslims. The mass transfer of wealth and commercial capability from non-Muslim to Muslim hands was also in keeping with the corresponding goal of the CUP's general reengineering strategy for Anatolia. Securing the empire's future was not simply a political project but an economic experiment in social engineering. Once land that formerly had belonged to Christians was settled with Muslims, Istanbul was confident that "a new culture of trade" and entrepreneurialism would take root among its seemingly more loyal and trustworthy constituents. The mass transfer of wealth are settled with Muslims, Istanbul was confident that a new culture of trade and entrepreneurialism would take root among its seemingly more loyal and trustworthy constituents.

KEEPING EASTERN THRACE, 1919 TO 1923

Istanbul's capitulation in November 1918 greatly unsettled the politics and territorial status of Eastern Thrace. Within a matter of weeks after the signing of the Mudros Armistice British and French officers arrived in the province in the hopes of laying the groundwork for a larger occupational force that would guard over both the Turkish Straits and interior territories. During the course of peace discussions in Paris on the future of the Ottoman Empire, Greek prime minister Eleftherios Venizelos advocated to the British government in early 1919 that Eastern Thrace, as well as Istanbul, be severed from a future Ottoman state and reconstituted as a separate independent entity under the administration of the League of Nations. ⁷⁶ Members of the British staff in Paris, in considering the future of Thrace, interpreted Venizelos's position with some skepticism. Arnold Toynbee, in a report written along with his colleague Harold Nicholson, suggested that the war's victorious powers should allow Greece to "cut the Gordian knot" and annex "European Turkey" except for the immediate interior of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles.⁷⁷ In January 1919 Greek troops entered Western Thrace, which promptly resulted

in a new wave of violence directed at the region's Bulgarian and Muslim residents.⁷⁸ In addition to the expulsion of thousands of native Bulgarians, violence directed toward Muslims living in Dedeağaç and Gümülcine resulted in a new outflow of refugees into Eastern Thrace.

British field reports from the winter and spring of 1919 offer a detailed account of the internal dynamics and anxieties governing Eastern Thrace at war's end. Among the main issues confronting both locals and foreign observers was the state of the region's returning Christians. The trickle of exiled Greeks and Armenians arriving in the province led to a new crisis in housing and resettlement. As in other corners of Anatolia, Istanbul sanctioned the creation of "mixed commissions" tasked with returning confiscated property (a process that achieved various degrees of success). In spring the imperial government issued arrest warrants for several local officials responsible for the deportation of Armenians. Nevertheless, according to British sources, the mayor (*belediye reis*) of Edirne, Şevket Bey, did attempt to build stronger relations with the Greek bishop of Edirne in the hopes of healing the wounds caused by the deportations and maintaining a spirit of political unity at this moment of political uncertainty. In the surface of the political uncertainty.

Before appealing to the bishop of Edirne, Şevket had journeyed to Istanbul in order to meet with noted CUP figures. His November meeting, which occurred days following the flight of Talat and other principal Young Turk leaders, affirmed the creation of a "popular organization [halk teşkilati]" tasked with upholding the territorial sovereignty of Eastern Thrace. 82 The formation of this CUP-led initiative provided the first organizational framework banding together other Muslim notables living in both halves of Thrace. As in other areas of what remained of the Ottoman Empire after 1919 the emerging "national movement" in Eastern and Western Thrace drew upon a large collective of Muslim landlords, provincial officials, army officers, urban professionals, and local gendarmes.⁸³ In the case of Eastern Thrace the Ottoman First Army Corps under the command of Cafer Tayyar Pasa formed the backbone of this opposition.⁸⁴ Meanwhile Western Thrace remained formally separate from the empire (despite appeals from the postwar imperial government), so the clandestine struggle to liberate Dedeağaç and Gümülcine from Greek control resumed under equally urgent circumstances. Under the direction of long-time paramilitary commander Fuat Balkan (who had participated in Süleyman Askeri's 1913 campaign in the region) small bands of irregular troops launched a modest guerrilla campaign against Greek positions throughout Western Thrace and portions of Macedonia. 85 Ironically,

elements of the Bulgarian military (as well as portions of the IMRO) actively collaborated with this ostensibly Ottoman Muslim movement. 86

The main thrust of Ottoman resistance efforts in Eastern Thrace between January 1919 and August 1920 came in the form of five mass congresses held in the province of Edirne. Tevfik Bıyıklıoğlu and Zekai Güner have taken great pains to document the activities and pronouncements of these congresses. Both of these scholars emphasize that the movement to forestall a seemingly impendent Greece's invasion of Eastern Thrace remained an initiative directed by remnants of the CUP, despite the populist character of these meetings (both in terms of their attendees and the decisions made). Şevket Bey as well as other veteran CUP officials staffed the chief body organizing antioccupation efforts, the Trakya-Paşaeli Defense Committee. Although the committee's endeavors began well before (and perhaps independently of) other "defense committees" in the empire, it is clear that Şevket and other resistance organizers coordinated closely with the principal officers and officials undertaking similar resistance efforts in the capital and the Anatolian interior. Mustafa Kemal himself took a personal interest in the resistance activities in Eastern Thrace as early as June 1919 (when he secretly directed Cafer Tayyar to send two representatives to Anatolia in advance of the Erzurum Congress in late July).87

Like other mass meetings held in Anatolia during the initial stages of the Turkish War of Independence, the congresses held in Eastern Thrace were only partially devoted to the logistics of organizing a militant struggle against foreign occupation.

B The bulk of the declarations issued by meetings held by the Trakya-Paşaeli Defense Committee centered on laying the rhetorical and legal foundation for the Ottoman Empire's retention of Eastern Thrace. Using Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points as the essential framework for its claims, the Trakya-Paşaeli Defense Committee vehemently argued that "Muslims and Turks" constituted the overwhelming demographic majority of Eastern Thrace's population.

**Sevket* and his compatriots did not deny the existence of non-Muslims living within the confines of the province of Edirne or avoid mentioning the departure of large numbers of Bulgarians from Eastern Thrace after the Balkan Wars.

**Nevertheless*, in addressing foreign audiences, the committee made it clear that Eastern Thrace could not be ceded to Greece, on national and demographic grounds.

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Activists based in the province of Edirne also attempted to play a supporting role in undermining the Greek occupation of Western Thrace (the Trakya-Paşaeli Defense Committee, for example, issued statements

on behalf of Muslims and to some degree Christian Bulgarians living in the region). Pevertheless, the struggle to liberate the counties of Dedeağaç and Gümülcine remained formally independent and distinct from the grander fight over the future of Anatolia and Eastern Thrace. Following the model of the 1913 effort undertaken by Süleyman Askeri, groups of local notables and former Ottoman officers endeavored to establish a separatist "republican" government in Western Thrace. Meanwhile Muslim representatives to the Bulgarian parliament lobbied Sofia, as well as Western nations, for recognition of the Muslim and Bulgarian Orthodox Christian character of the region. Hith the crafting of the so-called National Pact (Mısak-1 Milli) Mustafa Kemal's nascent Nationalist government called for the creation of a plebiscite to determine Western Thrace's political future (a demand that was similarly posed in the disputed districts of Batum, Kars, and Ardahan).

What is often forgotten in the rhetorical and diplomatic struggle over the political futures of both Eastern and Western Thrace is the activity of committees and individuals disassociated from or opposed to Mustafa Kemal's National Movement. Among the most vocal and proactive advocates for the establishment of a sovereign polity in Western Thrace was a longtime outspoken opponent to the CUP (as well the National Forces), İbrahim Hakkı (Gümülcineli). İn addition to serving as an anti-Nationalist governor of the province of Bursa during the Turkish War of Independence, İsmail Hakkı remained a prominent figure in his hometown of Gümülcine in his attempts to mediate among Greece, the National Movement, and Western states. 96 Although it would appear that his political loyalties wavered between the Nationalist fighters under Fuat Balkan and the Greek occupation, the overall historical record seems to suggest that İsmail Hakkı did commit himself to establishing an autonomous political future for Western Thrace (either as an independent state or as a region under Greek suzerainty).97

Equally overlooked or discredited by contemporary Turkish historians are the roles played by local and foreign advocates for Thrace's incorporation into the Kingdom of Greece. While Tevfik Bıyıklıoğlu emphasizes the degree to which Greek and "foreign" money and moral support contributed to the establishment of pro-Greek activists in both Western and Eastern Thrace, British documentary evidence suggests that local support for rule by Athens had a genuinely local character. ⁹⁸ One of the most noted pro-Greek groups active during the course of the Turkish War of Independence was the Confederation of Thrace (Thrakikos Syndesmos). As an organization led entirely by native Greek Orthodox

Christians of Eastern Thrace, the Confederation of Thrace demanded the region's inclusion into a greater Greece under the auspices of Wilson's Fourteen Points ("which everyone interprets according to his desires or views," as one British officer quipped). Included in this demand for Greek protection and governance was the stipulation that all refugees be allowed to return to Eastern Thrace (thereby, the report assumes, boosting the demographic basis for the confederation's pleas)."

British diplomats and officials, it should be noted, also considered the creation of an independent state in Thrace. Despite Toynbee's initial recommendations in 1919, the Foreign Office suggested that an "international state" in Thrace (which would include Edirne) was an optimal solution because it would not result in the mass removal of Muslims (which would cause "serious economic consequences") and would help keep the peace between Greece and Bulgaria. Eastern Thrace would not be included in any future Ottoman state, however, because it could not be "governed from Turkey-in-Asia." But within a year of this proposed solution Britain and France would concede to Greek demands and allow Athens to invade what remained of Ottoman Thrace. 101

When a Greek occupation force finally entered Eastern Thrace in June 1920, Nationalist fighters loyal to Cafer Tayyar and the Trakya-Paşaeli Defense Committee offered scant resistance. Between 1920 and 1922 Greek troops appear not to have faced the kind of violent insurgency that marked other occupied regions of Anatolia. Rule under Athens did certainly bring about a generalized pattern of oppression and policing that marked Greek governance in Western Thrace and Anatolia (such as beatings, mass arrests, and the enforced use of Greek flags and signs). The arming of local Greeks in paramilitary formations (setes) for the purposes of maintaining order and threatening Muslim civilians was an endemic trait of the occupational authorities (an issue repeatedly noted by Ottoman observers in Istanbul). Yet Muslims in Eastern Thrace were generally not subject to violent campaigns of mass removal or extermination (like those seen in the region of Yalova or İzmit in 1920 and 1921).

Nevertheless, Greek authorities did undertake efforts to resettle the region with Greek Orthodox Christians and "loyal" Muslims. According to British reports, Athens began to set in motion plans to settle displaced Ottoman Greeks from the Black Sea coast in Eastern Thrace as early as 1921. ¹⁰⁷ This was also the case for Western Thrace, which witnessed continued attacks upon Muslims in order to make room for the arrival of Greek migrants. ¹⁰⁸ In an interesting turn, Greek occupation authorities

also considered settling dissident Ottoman Muslims (particularly of North Caucasian descent) in both Western and Eastern Thrace in the hopes of creating a "Cossack-like" buffer between "Turkish" Anatolia and "Greek" Thrace.¹⁰⁹ What remains unclear is the degree to which Ottoman Greeks displaced between 1913 and 1916 were allowed to or were capable of returning to their homes during this period.

Eastern Thrace's "liberation" from Greek rule occurred without the great surge in violence and destruction that marked Mustafa Kemal's eviction of Greek troops from Anatolia. Diplomatic wrangling by Athens, Ankara, and London, as opposed to a clash of arms, marked the transfer of sovereignty to the nascent Turkish state in October 1922. The departure of Greek troops consequently led to the nearly complete disappearance of Eastern Thrace's Greek Orthodox population. Literally tens of thousands of Ottoman Greeks, as well as thousands of Muslims who had sided with the Greek occupation, fled across the Maritsa River in anticipation of the arrival of Kemalist forces. By 1925 the number of native Christians living in Eastern Thrace (including Bulgarians and Armenians) numbered in the hundreds. Tensions on the new Greek/Turkish border persisted after the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne. British reports from as late as 1925 suggest that Turkish paramilitary bands remained active on both sides of Thrace's frontier.

With the mass departure of Christians from Eastern Thrace at the close of hostilities in the fall of 1922, Ankara turned its attention to an issue that had lingered since the end of the Balkan Wars: the settlement and integration of Balkan refugees. In December 1922 the new Turkish Ministry of Health instructed local governors to inform Ankara as to the number of Albanians and Bosnians residing in their districts in the hopes of redistributing them to areas vacated by departing Christians. Officials in Eastern Thrace, as well as in Ankara, particularly singled out the province of Edirne as a region troubled by Albanians, Bosnians, and other "destructive" migrants. Albanians in Kırkkilesi, for example, had garnered a reputation for highway robbery and theft. Nevertheless, the decision to try to remove and resettle these migrants also admittedly affected Albanians who had long settled in Eastern Thrace as law-abiding citizens and workers. 115 At present it is unclear to what degree Ankara's 1922 plan to resettle Albanians and Bosnian from Edirne was ever fully accomplished.

Any hope for an independent Western Thrace ended with the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923. Despite having officially advocated for a plebiscite in the region (seemingly in the hopes of acquiring the territories around

Dedeağaç and Gümülcine), Mustafa Kemal publicly backed away from asserting Turkish sovereignty in late 1922. Even if Ankara did succeed in securing control over Western Thrace, he reasoned that Turkey would be in a perpetual state of strategic imbalance and weakness. In leaving the province to Greece, he asserted, Athens and Sofia would be left to fight among themselves. ¹¹⁶ Nevertheless, per the stipulations of the Lausanne Treaty, Athens was compelled officially to recognize Muslims residing in Western Thrace (thereby protecting them from being transferred to Turkey during the population exchange of 1923 and 1924). ¹¹⁷

CONCLUSION: THE MAKING OF "TURKISH THRACE"

Edirne became a Turkish provincial capital on October 29, 1923. With this turn in the city's history Eastern Thrace was permanently tied to the future of Anatolia and the Turkish Republic at large. No state since the Treaty of Lausanne has threatened Eastern Thrace or sought to wrest it from Turkish hands. Political affairs on the opposite side of the Maritsa River, unfortunately, remained unstable over the next several decades. Western Thrace would change hands twice more by the end of World War II. Violence continued to mar civil relations in the region after 1945 with the outbreak of the Greek Civil War. A similar but arguably more intense pattern of intercommunal violence and state oppression manifested itself farther east in Aegean Macedonia in the decades after the Treaty of Lausanne. 118 In securing Eastern Thrace from the threat of invasion and internal rebellion, the end of the Turkish War of Independence marked a definitive victory for CUP wartime planners. Perhaps the only blemish that marks the Turkish Republic's retention of Edirne and the renunciation of any territorial claims to Western Thrace is the ongoing dispute over Muslim civil rights in the old Ottoman towns of Gümülcine and Dedeağaç. Although no one in Turkey today would question Mustafa Kemal's wisdom in abandoning the "sacred duty" that bound Turks to Western Thrace (as Cemal referred to it), Athens's failure to uphold its full responsibilities to the region, as stipulated by the Treaty of Lausanne, continues to remain at issue. 119

The relative ease with which Ankara was able to integrate Eastern Thrace into the Republic of Turkey is a direct result of the CUP's wartime policies. While warfare involving the armies of the Ottoman Empire, Bulgaria, and Greece did result in shifts in population and the physical remapping of Thrace, it is clear that Istanbul's efforts to redistribute, expel, and liquidate elements of the province's population created

the political, economic, and social homogeneity that the CUP had sought. Even while under direct administration from Athens, Greek occupational authorities evidently were unable or unwilling completely to reverse the demographic transformation that Edirne experienced during the Great War. Ironically, despite attempts to cow the region's Muslim population and resettle parts of the province with displaced Christians, the hysteria that accompanied the withdrawal of Greek forces in 1922 helped to complete the CUP's deportation policies. The capricious departure of Greeks from Eastern Thrace, and their resettlement en masse in Macedonia and Western Thrace, provided both Ankara and Athens with a foretaste of the transfer of populations that would occur after the signing of the peace treaty at Lausanne. 120

It should be kept in mind that Eastern Thrace's social and economic integration into the workings and norms of the Turkish Republic did not end in 1923. In addition to the imposition of the Kemalist reforms of the interwar period, Ankara continued to sculpt and reengineer the demographic nature of the province of Edirne. Perhaps the most noted and dramatic case of postwar republican demographic politics in Eastern Thrace was the mass expulsion of Jews from the area in 1934. 121 Events and trends following after World War II have continued to test the CUP's original vision for the region. Arguably, the cultural and political nature of Eastern Thrace remains in a state of flux with the arrival and passage of new migrants and settlers from Bulgaria and the increasingly warm relations between Turkey and its Balkan neighbors to the west. 122 Nevertheless, the most fundamental goal of the Young Turk regime has undoubtedly been achieved; no one, save the most radical, would argue against Edirne's integral place within the modern state that came to succeed the CUP's beloved empire.

NOTES

- 1. Great Britain, National Archives (formerly Public Record Office), Foreign Office Papers, London (hereafter PRO/FO) 195/2456/148, March 31, 1914.
- 2. Mustafa Aksakal, "Not 'by Those Old Books of International Law But Only by War," 507–44.
- 3. The conflict of 1919 to 1923 goes by more than one name ("Greco-Turkish War" being among the most common). For the sake of continuity and because the war included multiple state and nonstate combatants I have opted to use "Turkish War of Independence."
- 4. See, for example, Ahmet Avanas, Milli Mücadele'de Konya; Yusuf Çam, Milli Mücadele'de İzmit Sancağı; Fahri Görgülü, Yunan İşgalinde Kirmasti

- (Mustafakemalpaşa); Orhan Hülagü, Milli Mücadele'de Bursa; Zekeriya Özdemir, Milli Mücadele Yıllarında Balıkesir Cepheleri; Kemal Özer, Kurtuluş Savaşında Gönen; Hüseyin Sarı, Milli Mücadele'de Bolu; Makbule Sarıkaya, Milli Mücadele Döneminde Rize; Ali Sarıkoyuncu, Milli Mücadele'de Zonguldak ve Havalisi; Necati Fahri Taş, Milli Mücadele Döneminde Yozgat.
- 5. Tevfik Bıyıklıoğlu, Trakya'da Milli Mücadele.
- 6. V. Türkan Doğruöz, Milli Müdadele'de Kırklareli.
- See, for example, Sabri Ateş, "Empire at the Margins"; David Gaunt, Massacres, Resistance, Protectors; Hans-Lukas Kieser, Der Verpasste Friede; Janet Klein, Power in the Periphery; Uğur Ümit Üngör, The Making of Modern Turkey: Nation and State in Eastern Anatolia, 1913–1950 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).
- 8. Michael A. Reynolds, "Buffers, Not Brethren," 138.
- 9. Michael A. Reynolds, Shattering Empires, 46-81.
- 10. Naturally, Ottoman statistics did not go uncontested in Thrace. According to a study initiated by the patriarchate in 1912, for example, Greeks were in the numeric majority in all of the province (338,728 Greeks and 327,911 Muslims) and in three out of six counties (Edirne, Kırkkilesi, and Gelibolu) in particular. The same statistics, while counting Bulgarians, do not record Armenians or Jews living in the province. Kemal H. Karpat, Ottoman Population (1830–1914), 166–67; Reply of the Hellenic Delegation to the Statements Submitted to the Peace Conference by the Bulgarian Delegation with Regard to the Policy of Bulgaria and Its Claim to Thrace, 27.
- 11. Karpat, Ottoman Population, 166-67.
- 12. See, for example, Dragi Gjorgiev, ed., *Britanski Dokumenti za Istorijata na Makedonija*, 535.
- 13. On August 26, 1903, IMRO agents set off a bomb aboard a train near Lüleburgaz, killing a number of Muslim civilians (including women and children). See "The Bomb Outrage," *Manchester Guardian*, August 29, 1903; "Train Blown Up: Many Killed and Injured," *Daily News*, August 28, 1903.
- 14. According to Duncan Perry, the IMRO initiated a total of 36 attacks within the province of Thrace during the rebellion. By contrast, a total of 150 engagements took place in Manastir during this period: Duncan Perry, *The Politics of Terror*, 154.
- 15. See, for example, Staatsarchiv/Austrian State Archives, Vienna, Austria (hereafter HHStA) PA XXXVIII/373, August 4, 1904; PRO/FO 371/581/1234, January 13, 1908.
- 16. PRO/FO 371/816/13683, 13 April 13, 1909.
- 17. Some sectarian violence did follow the Young Turk Revolution. In November 1908, an unknown band of militants attacked a train station in Çerkesköy. Although this was originally suspected of being a Slav group, British agents report that the Greek consul in Tekirdağ was later suspected of having organized the attack. PRO/FO 371/816/1234, January 11, 1909.
- 18. PRO/FO 371/585/30986, September 7, 1908.
- 19. Hacı Adil is a particularly important figure in the early years of the Committee of Union and Progress in power. In addition to serving as prewar governor of Edirne, he was among the chief ideologues and orators.
- 20. PRO/FO 371/585/30986, September 7, 1908; PRO/FO 371/816/13683, April 13, 1909.

- 21. Aykut Kansu, Politics in Post-Revolutionary Turkey, 1908–1913, 361.
- 22. Politisches Archiv-Auswärtiges Amt/Archive of the German Foreign Ministry, Berlin, Germany (hereafter PAAA) Istanbul (Rodosto) 50 no. 55, dragoman of the consul to the consul general, November 18, 1912; PAAA Istanbul (Rodosto) 50 no. 60, dragoman of the consul to the consul general, December 9, 1912.
- 23. A commission of observers from the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace interviewed refugees from Thrace in the aftermath of the Balkan Wars. According to their accounts, Bulgarians and Greeks were subject to random killings and thefts. In Rodosto Ottoman officers specifically accused Armenians and Greeks of collaborating with the Bulgarian occupation and of seizing government property and the property of displaced Muslims. Report of the International Commission to Inquire into the Causes and Conduct of the Balkan Wars, 126–30.
- 24. Among the most notorious incidents was the Bulgarian treatment of Ottoman prisoners of war in the environs of Edirne. In the waning days of the Second Balkan War Ottoman prisoners were abandoned on an island close to Edirne and left to starve. Bulgarian soldiers reportedly ransacked much of Edirne during the course of the occupation. *Report of the International Commission*, 110–23.
- 25. Western Thrace was the scene of vicious attacks by regular and irregular forces during the course of both Balkan Wars. Bulgarian, Greek, and Muslim civilians all suffered at the hands of the competing armed factions (particularly because control over the region wavered among Bulgarian, Ottoman, and Greek troops). Even before the mass deportations and expulsions of Christians from Eastern Thrace, Bulgarians expelled from Greek-occupied Macedonia settled in abandoned Greekowned homes in Dedeağaç. A particularly troubling trend for both the Ottoman government and foreign observers involved Bulgarian efforts forcibly to convert Pomaks (Bulgarian-speaking Muslims living in the Rhodope Mountains) to Christianity. PRO/FO 195/2454/3962, September 4, 1913; PRO/FO 195/2454/4040, September 11, 1913; PRO/FO 195/2454/4516, October 25, 1913; PRO/FO 195/2456/288, January 5, 1914.
- 26. One of the interesting sources of information on the state of affairs in the former territories of the Ottoman Balkans can be found in "letters" or reports posted to the Istanbul press. Most of these letters feature accounts of Muslim life after the fall of imperial rule. See, for example, "Rumeli Mektubu," *Tanin*, May 18, 1914; "Selanik Mektubu," *Tanin*, April 3, 1914; "Siroz Mektubu," *Tanin*, April 9, 1914.
- 27. The epitome of this sentiment is found in a much-cited passage from Falih Rifki Atay, an Ottoman journalist from the turn of the century. Before the Balkan Wars, according to Atay, "Anatolia did not give us a feeling of 'wholeness." By the end of World War I, with partitioning of the Arab lands, Anatolia came to be seen by many Ottomans as the last "fatherland." Şerif Mardin, "The Ottoman Empire," 115. Also see Erik J. Zürcher, "Greek and Turkish Refugees and Deportees, 1912–1924," 1–2.
- 28. An often-cited number for the ultimate sum of Muslim refugees found in Anatolia by 1920 is 509,922 (which includes not only refugees from the Balkan mainland but also migrants from Crete, Cyprus, and other islands). According to Talat Paşa's papers, the province of Edirne was the second most common destination for refugees (although the exact date of this information is unknown). Murat Bardakçı,

- *Talat Paşa'nın Evrak-ı Metrukesi*, 35–43; Başbakanlık Cumhuriyet Arşivi (Prime Minister's Republican Archive (hereafter BCA) 272.14.75.24.6.21, September 1920.
- For a map showing where budgetary priorities were allocated according to regions in Anatolia inhabited by displaced Balkan refugees, see Bardakçı, *Talat Paşa'nın Evrak-ı Metrukesi*, 85.
- 30. Djemal Pasha, Memories of a Turkish Statesman, 1913–1919, 19.
- 31. Ibid., 48.
- 32. Ibid., 53-54.
- 33. Bıyıklıoğlu, *Trakya'da Milli Mücadele*, 84–86; PRO/FO 195/2456/288, January 5, 1914.
- 34. Fuat Balkan, *Komitaci*, 39–53. See Philip H. Stoddard, "The Ottoman Government and the Arabs, 1911 to 1918," 52–54; PRO/FO 195/2454/4132, September 18, 1913.
- 35. PRO/FO 195/2454/5414, December 31, 1913; PRO/FO 195/2456/2802, June 30, 1914.
- 36. PAAA 50 Istanbul (Rodosto) no. 97, dragoman of the consul to the consul general, September 20, 1913.
- 37. PRO/FO 195/2456/1421, March 31, 1914.
- 38. PRO/FO 195/2454/5414, December 31, 1913.
- 39. In advance of the 1914 session of parliament *Tanin* conducted interviews of various elected members and other notable political figures of the day. In an interview with Hacı Adil, who was then governor of Edirne, the issue of refugees and resettlement featured prominently in his comments. "Bugünkü Edirne'nin Heyet Umumiyesi Hacı Adil Bey'le Mulakat," *Tanin*, March 26, 1914.
- Bıyıklıoğlu, *Trakya'da Milli Mücadele*, 93; PAAA 51 Istanbul General Consulate (Dedeagatsch), Bericht no. 2238, October 4, 1913; PRO/FO 195/2456/2802, June 30, 1914.
- 41. PAAA 4 Solaniki, folder 1, no. 145, January 8, 1913 (in Ottoman Turkish).
- 42. After the landing of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) the British War Office compiled handbooks for select coastal regions around the Sea of Marmara. In surveying the social and demographic characteristics of Tekirdağ, British intelligence sources suggested that to "attempt to distinguish between one group of Moslems and another is impossible." Nevertheless, Tekirdağ clearly included native Turkish-speakers (sometimes called Gacars), Albanian-and Serb-speaking Muslims (both refugees and seasonal migrant workers), and Pomaks. PRO/WO 105/5978, September 1915.
- 43. Among Talat Paşa's personal papers is an undated registry of the numbers of officials and military officers (and their families) residing in the Ottoman Empire as refugees from the Balkans. According to these figures, only ninety-nine displaced officials and their relatives resided in the province of Edirne (compared to over nine thousand who sought refuge in Istanbul). See Bardakçı, *Talat Paşa'nın Evrak-ı Metrukesi*, 42–43.
- 44. Erik J. Zürcher, "Young Turks—Children of the Borderlands?" 279-82.
- 45. In addition to his interest in Muslim refugees, Talat (along with Hacı Adil) personally toured Çorlu at the time of the Greek deportations. PAAA Istanbul (Rodosto) 50 no. 63, dragoman of the vice consul to the general consul, April 25,

- 1914; PRO/FO 195/2456/2802, June 30, 1914; PAAA R 13928, A132434, November 9, 1915.
- 46. Fuat Dündar, İttihat ve Terakki'nin Müslümanları İskan Politikası (1913–1918), 60–62; Üngör, The Making of Modern Turkey, 33–42.
- 47. I deal with this topic in greater detail in Ryan Gingeras, Sorrowful Shores, 45–46.
- 48. PRO/FO 195/2454/3745, August 17, 1913.
- 49. PRO/FO 195/2454/5414, December 31, 1913.
- 50. An undated document in Talat Paşa's personal papers puts the number of Bulgarians who fled to Bulgaria at 46,510 (in addition to another 20,000 who fled the provinces of Karesi, Çatalca, and Kala-1 Sultaniye). A registry from July 1914 suggests that the counties of Mustafapaşa, Kırkkilesi, Malkara, and Pınarhisar were particularly affected by the expulsion of eastern Thrace's Bulgarian population. H. Yıldırım Ağanoğlu, Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e Balkanları'ın Makûs Talihi Göç, 129; Bardakçı, Talat Paşa'nın Evrak-1 Metrukesi, 79.
- 51. Yannis G. Mourelos, "The 1914 Persecutions and the First Attempt at an Exchange of Minorities between Greece and Turkey."
- 52. Taner Akçam, From Empire to Republic, 144.
- 53. PAAA Istanbul (Rodosto) 50 no. 34, dragoman of the vice consul to the general consul, April 3, 1914; PRO/FO 195/2454/5414, December 31, 1913; PRO/FO 195/2456/2802, June 30, 1914.
- 54. PRO/FO 195/2456/1421, March 31, 1914; Eyal Ginio, "Port Cities as an Imagined Battlefield."
- 55. PAAA Istanbul (Rodosto) 50 no. 63, dragoman of the vice consul to the general consul, April 25, 1914.
- 56. PRO/FO 195/2456/1421, March 31, 1914.
- 57. An official estimate of departed Ottoman Greeks from Thrace calculated a grand total of 56,191 persons as of July 1914. The majority of the departing Greek population came from either Vize (13,442) or Tekirdağ (12,337). Yannis Mourelos, in studying Greek records, poses a similar number (60,000 departed Greeks). See Ağanoğlu, Osmanli'dan Cumhuriyet'e Balkanları'ın Makûs Talihi Göç, 129; Mourelos, "The 1914 Persecutions," 391–92.
- 58. "Muhacirler," *Tasvir-i Efkar*, January 1, 1919.
- 59. PRO/FO 195/2458/2160, May 28, 1914.
- BCA 272.14.74.9.15, September 18, 1917; BOA, DH.ŞFR 54/216, 28 May 28, 1915;
 BOA, DH.ŞFR 54/246, June 30, 1915. Dündar, İttihat ve Terakki'nin Müslümanları İskan Politikası, 113–114, 121.
- 61. Dündar, İttihat ve Terakki'nin Müslümanları İskan Politikası, 123–58, 165–72.
- 62. BOA, DH.ŞFR 53/75, May 22, 1915; BOA, DH.ŞFR 53/143, May 27, 1915; BOA, DH.ŞFR 54/108, June 22, 1915; BOA, DH.ŞFR 54/108, June 22, 1915; BOA, DH.ŞFR 54/158, June 26, 1915; BOA, DH.ŞFR 54/172, June 29, 1915; BOA, DH.ŞFR 54/158, June 26, 1916; BOA, DH.ŞFR 63/217, May 6, 1916; BOA, DH.ŞFR 63/264, MAY 10, 1916; BOA, DH.ŞFR 70/107, November 27, 1916; BOA, DH.ŞFR 70/109, November 27, 1916 (quotation). According to these documents, deportees were settled in Muslim, Armenian, and Rum villages in Karesi and Hüdavendigar (such as Soma) as well as in Bandırma. Others later emigrated to Greece. In the fall of 1916, despite the need to solve this "crowd control" problem, Rum were not permitted to return or be sent to neighboring districts.

- 63. BOA, DH.ŞFR 54/180, June 29, 1915; BOA, DH.ŞFR 54/276, July 1, 1915; BOA, DH.ŞFR 54/279, July 1, 1915; BOA, DH.ŞFR 54-A/185, July 30, 1915; BOA, DH.ŞFR 54-A/338, August 10, 1915; PAAA R 13928 A32321, November 8, 1915; PAAA R 13929 A2177, July 6, 1916.
- 64. An estimated 33,317 homes were left abandoned by Ottoman Greeks in the aftermath of the Balkan Wars. After World War I it was reported that over 90,000 homes were left abandoned by deported Greeks alone. Talat Paşa's papers offer further details as to the actual monetary value of abandoned Greek property (including homes, livestock, and foodstuffs). Bardakçı, *Talat Paşa'nın Evrak-ı Metrukesi*, 81; "Muhacirler," *Tasvir-i Efkar*, January 1, 1919.
- 65. Raymond Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 545–46.
- BOA, DH.ŞFR 57/274, November 4, 1915; Kevorkian, The Armenian Genocide, 546–49.
- 67. Kevorkian, The Armenian Genocide, 746.
- 68. According to one undated document, 3,133 Armenian homes were left abandoned as a result of the deportations. The majority of these homes were found in Gelibolu (1,490). See Bardakçı, *Talat Paşa'nın Evrak-ı Metrukesi*, 91, 93; BOA, DH.ŞFR 54/180, June 29, 1915.
- 69. Talat Paşa's papers contain a curious tabulation of Muslim refugees in the empire both before and after the Balkan Wars. According to these estimates, 112,119 refugees were present in Edirne *before* the Balkan Wars and 81,542 refugees after the wars were over. Bardakçı, *Talat Paşa'nın Evrak-ı Metrukesi*, 35, 39.
- 70. While the so-called lost papers are revealing, it should be kept in mind that these reports in Talat Paşa's personal collection are undated and offer no clues on how and in what order various tabulations were formulated.
- 71. The accusations of collaboration even postdate the Balkan Wars. According to information published in an Armenian newspaper in New York City, Armenian boatmen from the environs of Silivri were accused of provisioning English submarines. According to Talat Paşa's personal defense of his wartime actions, Armenians in both Istanbul and Edirne lived "very much at ease and prosperously." Nevertheless, he argued, Armenians never spilled blood to save the Ottoman state. Arnold Toynbee, *The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire*, 1915–1916, 390; Talat Paşa, *Hatıralarım ve Müdafaam*, 65 (quotation).
- 72. Gingeras, Sorrowful Shores, 47-51.
- 73. PAAA R 13929 A2177, July 6, 1916; PAAA R 13939 A2727, June 16, 1917.
- 74. See, for example, Bedross Der Matossian, "The Taboo within the Taboo."
- 75. The phrase quoted here is taken from BOA, DH.ŞFR 59/239, January 6, 1916.
- 76. Michael Llewellyn Smith, Ionian Vision, 71.
- 77. Ibid., 76.
- 78. Stanford J. Shaw, From Empire to Republic, 463–64.
- 79. PRO/FO 371/4157/60179, April 17, 1919; PRO/FO 371/4157/68031, May 3, 1919; PRO/FO 371/4157/84434, June 5, 1919; PRO/FO 371/4157/88130, June 13, 1919; PRO/FO 608/118/10179, May 17, 1919. According to records issued by British observers, only four pairs of draught animals and twenty-two cows could be given back to Greeks returning to villages in the region of Uzunköprü (697 families in total). This, in the estimation of British observers, was a testament to the sheer lack of animals and other supplies available to the entire population.

- 80. PRO/FO 371/4157/60179, April 17, 1919; PRO/FO 371/4157/68031, May 3, 1919. Among those arrested was Zekeriya Bey, Edirne's former governor and a critical figure in the organization of the National Movement in Eastern Thrace.
- 81. PRO/FO 371/4157/521, January 1, 1919.
- 82. Bıyıklıoğlu, *Trakya'da Milli Mücadele*, 123–25. Also at this meeting on December 2, 1918, was the parliamentary representative for Edirne, Faik (Kaltakkıran). The Trakya-Paşaeli Defense Committee was first conceived at this meeting. The idea for this "popular organization" was originally suggested by Talat Paşa in September in a secret meeting with Zekeriya Bey, then governor of Edirne.
- 83. PRO/FO 371/4161/49194, March 19, 1919.
- 84. Shaw, From Empire to Republic, 467.
- 85. Details of some of these operations, such as the blowing up of bridges and clashes with Greek troops, can be found in Balkan, *Komitaci*, 171–76.
- 86. The IMRO's support for anti-Greek efforts in Western Thrace first materialized as early as 1914. By the time of the Turkish War of Independence IMRO guerrillas continued to play a role in supporting the Ottoman insurgency in the region. Among the chief interlocutors in forging an Ottoman-IMRO alliance was Cevat Abbas (Gürer), representative for Bolu in the last Ottoman parliament and the first Turkish Grand National Assembly, and Todor Aleksandrov, postwar leader of the IMRO. Balkan, *Komitaci*, 25–26; Bıyıklıoğlu, *Trakya'da Milli Mücadele*, 386–90; PRO/FO 371/6509/4602, April 14, 1921.
- 87. Zekai Güner, Trakya-Paşaeli Müdafaa-i Hukuk Cemiyeti ve Faaliyetleri, 87–88.
- 88. For example, at the "grand congress" held in Edirne in May 1920, Cafer Tayyar put forward a general plan for holding the province and maintaining internal security in preparation for armed resistance. See Bıyıklıoğlu, *Trakya'da Milli Mücadele*, 277–78.
- 89. Güner, Trakya-Paşaeli Müdafaa-i Hukuk Cemiyeti ve Faaliyetleri, 136. The first decision of the Grand Edirne Congress, for example, declared that Thrace could not be handed over to Greece because it belonged to the "Ottoman society [camia-i Osmaniye'den]" and "firmly represented a Turkish and Muslim majority." The use of the dyad "Muslim and Turk" can be found in other National Movement documents and declarations as well.
- 90. Ibid., 160, 152.
- 91. See, for example, "Trakya Daima Osmanlı'dır," *Trakya*, October 2, 1919.
- 92. Güner, *Trakya-Paşaeli Müdafaa-i Hukuk Cemiyeti ve Faaliyetleri*, 101–5. Nevertheless, the Trakya-Paşaeli Defense Committee maintained that Bulgarians did not represent a major component in Eastern Thrace. "Hak ve Hakikat Durundayiz," *Trakya*, October 2, 1919.
- 93. Balkan, Komitacı, 109–12; Güner, Trakya-Paşaeli Müdafaa-i Hukuk Cemiyeti ve Faaliyetleri, 103–5.
- 94. See, for example, PRO/FO 608/31/12893, June 17, 1919.
- 95. It is interesting to note that there were various definitions of what constituted Thrace as a unitary geographic whole. At the Edirne Congress in May 1920 Ali Galip (Gümülcineli) posed that Thrace in fact included both eastern and western (Dedeağaç and Gümülcine) halves as well as the regions of Drama, Serez, and the Rhodope mountains. See Bıyıklıoğlu, *Trakya'da Milli Mücadele*, 282–83.

- 96. Kamil Erdaha, Milli Mücadele'de Vilayetler ve Valiler, 333.
- 97. Balkan, Komitaci, 96; PRO/FO 608/118/8662, April 29, 1919.
- 98. News of the Greek occupation of Western Thrace (and the posting of small numbers of Greek troops throughout the province) was purportedly greeted warmly and enthusiastically by many Greeks living in the province of Edirne. Biyiklioğlu, *Trakya'da Milli Müdadele*, 190; PRO/FO 608/118/10101, May 17, 1919.
- 99. PRO/FO 608/118/15524, July 17, 1919.
- 100. PRO/FO 608/118/5, March 11, 1919.
- 101. Smith, Ionian Vision, 127.
- 102. Bıyıklıoğlu, Trakya'da Milli Müdadele, 350-75.
- 103. Eastern Thrace does not possess an equivalent, for example, of akinci İbrahim Ethem's "flying columns" (which operated behind enemy lines in Karesi) during this period. The Trakya-Paşaeli Defense Committee did continue to function in part in exile in Bulgaria after the Greek occupation but appears to have done little more than openly protest acts of Greek oppression. Doğruöz, Milli Müdadele'de Kırklareli, 125–60.
- 104. BOA, DH. KMS 60-3/2, August 9, 1921. This dossier contains multiple accounts (including petitions) detailing beatings, killings, and acts of extortion committed by Greek forces against Muslims in the province of Edirne and in Western Thrace. They include acts of deportation (primarily targeting individuals as opposed to whole villages or districts). The file also details the recruitment of deported Armenians and Ottoman Greeks (primarily in Western Thrace) into paramilitary units.
- 105. One such example of these paramilitary groups, headed by a notorious figure named Buzi Pehlivan, was found in the region of Silviri. BOA, DH.KMS 60-1/83, April 3, 1921.
- 106. BOA, DH.KMS 60-2/20, May 19, 1921; BOA, DH.KMS 60-2/39, June 12, 1921; Arnold J. Toynbee, *The Western Question in Greece and Turkey*, 310–11.
- 107. BOA, DH. KMS 60-3/22, September 7, 1921.
- 108. PRO/FO 608/118/11703, June 4, 1919; PRO/FO 371/6537/13981, December 21, 1921.
- 109. BCA 30.10.0.0.64.427.7, July 26, 1925; PRO/FO 371/5171/13982, October 16, 1920; PRO/FO 371/7919/14515, December 12, 1922 (quotations).
- 110. This point needs a bit more study. According to the Istanbul press, Greek troops purportedly burned down forty villages in the environs of Kırkkilesi two days before the Mudanya Armistice. Doğruöz, Milli Müdadele'de Kırklareli, 162.
- 111. Bıyıklıoğlu, Trakya'da Milli Müdadele, 438-63; Smith, Ionian Vision, 317-18.
- 112. Smith, *Ionian Vision*, 319–21. Among those who witnessed the flight of refugees out of Eastern Thrace was Ernest Hemingway, who estimated that a quarter of a million Greeks fled that province alone.
- 113. A. A. Palis, author of *Exchange of Populations in the Balkans* (n.p., 1925), suggests that only 1,200 Ottoman Greeks resided in Eastern Thrace at war's end. While anecdotal evidence suggests that large numbers of Ottoman Greeks fled in advance of the Mustafa Kemal's forces, it is difficult to find statistical projections or the actual numbers of Greek refugees. The British War Office, for example, projected in May 1922 that anywhere between 600,000 and 700,000 civilians (not only Greeks but Muslim and Armenian collaborators and their families) would flee Anatolia

- should the Greek occupation collapse. PRO/FO 286/928/741, June 10, 1925; PRO/WO 158/485/2489, May 22, 1922.
- 114. Ottoman Greek/Armenian paramilitary units also continued to exist on the Greek side of the border in Western Thrace after the war. Fighting in Western Thrace continued into the spring of 1923. BCA 030.10.253.706.30, June 21, 1924; PRO/FO 286/932/3343, June 23, 1925; PRO/FO 371/9099/747,8 January 18, 1923.
- 115. BCA 272.11.16.66.1, August 4, 1923.
- 116. Vemund Aarbakke, "Images of Imperial Legacy," 118–19; Güner, *Trakya-Paşaeli Müdafaa-i Hukuk Cemiyeti ve Faaliyetleri*, 85.
- 117. For greater discussion of Muslim life in Western Thrace after 1923, see Kevin Featherstone et al., *The Last Ottomans*.
- 118. See, for example, Loring Danforth and Riki Van Boeschoten, *Children of the Greek Civil War*; Anastasia N. Karakasidou, *Fields of Wheat, Hills of Blood*, 204–7.
- 119. See http://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkish-minority-of-western-thrace.en.mfa.
- 120. Bruce Clark, Twice a Stranger, 51.
- 121. See Rifat N. Bali, "The 1934 Thrace Events."
- 122. Theo Nichols et al., "Muhacir Bulgarian Workers in Turkey." Few studies on a provincial level appear to be available on the cultural or sociopolitical implications of the mixing of new migrants and older residents in Turkey (whether locals or migrant Turks, Kurds, *muhacirs* [immigrants] or others).

Call to the Rescue

World War I through the Eyes of Women

Serpil Atamaz

Wars, especially those before the twenty-first century, tend to be studied mostly from the male perspective, as if they involve and concern only men, because they were usually the ones who fought as combatants on the battlefield, developed military strategies as commanders, and made the most important decisions regarding the war as politicians. World War I is no exception. Even though it "was the first European war of the modern era to demand the full participation of both combatants and noncombatants" and created a "continuum between home front and front line," blurring the boundaries separating war from home,¹ it has been analyzed as a male-only endeavor, with women only mentioned in passing in most works.² Studies on the Ottoman Empire during World War I suffer even more from the same problem than those on Europe. That is why this chapter examines World War I from the perspective of women.

Through an analysis of the hitherto-ignored writings of Ottoman women in the early twentieth century and of secondary sources on the Ottoman Empire during wartime, I first explore women's involvement in World War I through voluntary work or as part of the government's attempt at mobilizing the society for the salvation of the nation. I explain women's role in the war through their participation in specific initiatives such as the nursing programs opened by Hilal-i Ahmer Cemiyeti (Red Crescent Society) and Kadın Amele Taburları (Women Workers' Battalions, 1917) as well as activities of individual women who participated in the war effort in different capacities. I also analyze the impact of the war on women, focusing on issues such as women's employment, education, journals, and organizations and considering both the opportunities and the problems that the war created for women. Finally, I study women's

journals of the early twentieth century to understand how women perceived the war and the issues that concerned them. I hope that this chapter not only demonstrates the various purposes that World War I served for women but also provides a fresh insight into the war by shedding light on one of its previously unexplored aspects.

WOMEN'S INVOLVEMENT IN WORLD WAR I

Nurses

A small number of women had already started working at hospitals and behind the front line as nurses and nurses' aides during the Balkan Wars. Completing the first training program offered by the Red Crescent Society under the leadership of Besim Ömer Paşa, women such as Kerime Salahor, Safiye Hüseyin Elbi, and Münire İsmail helped many wounded soldiers as well as the civilian population who got caught in the fighting between 1912 and 1913.

Having to deal with many problems due to the shortage of health personnel during the Balkan Wars and feeling the need to prepare for the possibility of another war, the Red Crescent Society intensified its efforts to recruit women and train them as nurses as these wars came to an end. As part of these efforts, the society not only started new training programs in which women were educated about anatomy, surgery, patient care, and sterilization but also organized seminars at the university (darülfünun) that aimed to increase women's interest in nursing and prepare those who were already interested for a professional career.⁵

In these seminars, some of which were published shortly afterward under the titles "A Lecture for Women about the Red Crescent" and "The Moral Duties and the Daily Duty of a Nurse during the Time of War," Besim Ömer Paşa explained the vital role of women. While the war was going on with full force and all men had to bear arms to defend the borders, it fell primarily upon women to provide the proper care for the wounded and the sick. But women's services were needed not only during wartime and because of the shortage of men. He argued that women were preferable to men in many cases due to their compassionate and tender nature as well as their tolerance for hardship and sleep deprivation. Women had to continue working as nurses even in times of peace. They needed to occupy an important position in social life and be geared toward an occupation in accordance with their natural disposition in order for both the nation and womanhood to advance. In addition to providing scientific and occupational information in his lectures,

Besim Ömer Paşa also discussed the history of the role of women in the field of medicine, the foundation of the Red Cross Society, the example of Florence Nightingale, and the activities of the Ottoman Red Crescent Society and its Women's Chapter.

Upon gaining their certificates, women who attended the training programs and seminars offered by the various branches of the Red Crescent Society immediately started working in military, civil, or makeshift hospitals established by the state, national organizations, or private individuals. It is worth mentioning that some of these hospitals were converted from schools, mosques, farms, and even prisons. According to the calendar of the Red Crescent Society, the number of nurses sent to various hospitals in 1915 was 284. The total number of women who provided patient care during World War I was probably much higher: this calendar covered one year, only counted the nurses affiliated with the Red Crescent Society, and did not include many others who worked as volunteers in different parts of the empire.

These nurses not only took care of the wounded soldiers and people suffering from epidemic diseases but also helped establish new hospitals and train new nurses during wartime. While the prominent women's rights activist Aziz Haydar trained young nurses at the hospital that she opened, a newly graduated nurse named Fatma Züleyha translated a book from English and published it under the title Hastabakıcılık (Nursing) in 1915. In the preface of this book she wrote that "the work of a physician will not yield any results unless he has a nurse who has studied anatomy and acquired medical knowledge in a scientific way." Working closely with organizations such as the Red Crescent Society and the National Defense Society, some nurses even helped provide beds, clothes, cigarettes, and food for the wounded soldiers. 11 The services of female nurses were crucial, due to a considerable shortage of health personnel during World War I. At a time when the number of doctors and doctors' aides with the necessary training to take care of the wounded was insufficient and even some soldiers were asked to assist the doctors, Turkish women filled a huge gap. 12

Women who served as nurses during World War I, whether as professionals like Zinnur Hanım or as volunteers like Emine Semiye, had to work in difficult conditions, made many sacrifices, and sometimes even lost their lives due to infectious diseases. ¹³ To celebrate their devotion and service to the nation as well as to encourage other women to follow in their footsteps, the Red Crescent Society "had them photographed and had their pictures made while on duty...which were later duplicated

as postcards and stamps."¹⁴ The efforts of these nurses were also recognized by leaders and intellectuals of the time. While "the prominent higher officials of the Palace and the state would be present at the ceremonies of certificates given to the nurses and granted them medals of honor,"¹⁵ male and female intellectuals praised them in prose and poetry A good example is Mehmed Emin's book entitled *Hastabakıcı Hanımlar*, consisting of a single long poem dedicated to female nurses. ¹⁶

Helping save people's lives, attending to the needs of the sick and the wounded, and boosting the morale of soldiers, women who served as nurses during wartime met an important need and played a crucial role in the war effort. They also helped challenge the long-held views about women through their resilience, strength, and determination as they worked without enough sleep, food, or rest for hours and sometimes even for days. Through their dedication, compassion, and sacrifices these women gained people's appreciation and proved what women could do if given the chance. As their photographs were printed in the press and circulated in public by means of postcards and stamps, the image of women in white uniforms became engrained in people's minds. Working and interacting closely with male personnel and patients, and becoming increasingly visible to ordinary people in the street, female nurses helped women transgress some gender boundaries as well. Even though they were usually regarded as performing feminine tasks, their unsupervised contact with men, visibility in public, and active contribution to the defense of the nation ultimately led to the relaxation of practices regarding gender segregation and to the normalization and justification of women's presence in different areas of life.

Workers in the Military

Ottoman women also participated in World War I through Kadın Amele Taburları, an institution that operated under the framework of the Ottoman army and was founded on Enver Paşa's initiative both to compensate for the shortage of manpower and to enable women to earn an honest living. Women who wanted to apply for a position within this institution had to be between the ages of eighteen and thirty, strong, healthy, virtuous, and without small children. People approached this institution with caution and suspicion: at first not many women applied. Therefore the government tried to encourage potential applicants by putting out ads and publishing articles in newspapers as well as by sending notices to local officials and religious leaders in different cities that explained how

the institution was going to work and what would be expected from the workers.

Eventually more than three hundred women registered to work in shifts at the Women Workers' Battalion in Istanbul, which was located in an isolated place called Sultan Tepesi in Üsküdar and guarded by armed soldiers. 19 After signing a contract in November 1917, each of these women was photographed, given an identification card, and provided with necessary items and clothing.²⁰ While some women worked in agriculture, transportation, road construction, and trench-digging, others served as carpenters, tailors, nurses, cooks, storage managers, accountants, and clerks. Women who worked in the administrative staff, such as head clerk Adile Süleyman Hanım, were chosen from among the educated women in Istanbul. Many women in the battalion were not used to manual labor and could not work in harsh winter conditions, so they were given easier tasks that could be performed inside, like stitching and spinning yarn.²¹ Divided into two main groups in accordance with the tasks that they performed and the way in which they were paid, these women had to wear different decorations and follow a certain hierarchy.²²

A woman's battalion in Syria was organized under the leadership of Cemal Paşa, the commander of the 4th Army. Women who were part of this battalion were in charge of harvesting "grain needed by the military in the fertile regions of Adana and the Jordan valley." ²³ Ending operations in the fall of 1918 due to circumstances after World War I, Kadın Amele Taburları was officially abolished in January 1919.

Albeit short lived, Kadın Amele Taburları was a significant initiative that demonstrated how much the government came to depend on women during wartime and led them to perform challenging but much needed tasks to improve the deteriorating condition of the Ottoman army. It officially made women a part of the military and assigned them tasks that had previously been reserved for men. Asked and expected to do what was traditionally regarded as a "man's job" in harsh conditions in these battalions, Ottoman women began to escape the gender-specific roles that they were generally ascribed (for example, as caregivers) as well as some of the stereotypes that described them as fragile, lazy, and incompetent. The difficult tasks that they had to perform also helped women to draw attention to problems such as lack of opportunities for women's education and physical training, which gained more importance as the nation's expectations for its women both increased and became diversified in World War I.²⁴

Voluntary Work

Women's involvement in World War I was not limited to nursing and their service in women's battalions. Women also helped the war effort by providing food and shelter for the hungry, ill, and homeless, most of whom were widows and orphans; raising money for the army by putting on plays, selling calendars, and organizing cultural events such as lectures, concerts, and exhibitions; and donating money, clothes, and jewelry to the military.²⁵ While some of these acts were individual initiatives taken by women who were not necessarily associated with any social or political organizations, others were performed by women's organizations that were established specifically to address the needs and problems brought about by World War I.

The most prominent of these organizations were Asker Ailelerine Yardımcı Hanımlar Cemiyeti (Society for Aid to Soldiers' Families, 1914) and Şehit Ailelerine Yardım Birliği (Union for Aid to Martyred Soldiers' Families, 1915). The Society for Aid provided around 23,000 families with regular supplies of oil, rice, beans and salt, while the Union for Aid offered martyrs' widows a monthly income and put their orphans in school. The founders and members of these organizations were mostly the wives and sisters of high-ranking leaders or female intellectuals from middle-class backgrounds. Mehmet Beşikçi argues that the attempt of high-ranking authorities' wives to help women whose men were sacrificing their lives for the fatherland on the battlefield was important, because it contributed to the legitimation of the government's war policies by demonstrating that the state had a compassionate attitude even in the hardest times. The same are also a compassionate attitude even in the hardest times.

Some institutions established and operated by women, such as Biçki Yurdu (Tailors' Cutting Home), changed their mission after the war to help defend the country in their own way. Originally opened by Behire Hakki Hanım in 1913 to end women's dependency on others and to support the national economy by teaching women how to do needlework, Biçki Yurdu started producing uniforms, undergarments, and sandbags for soldiers on the battlefield after the Ottoman Empire's entry into World War I.²⁹ Even though Biçki Yurdu suffered from financial hardships, 366 women were enrolled in the institution in 1917. Upon graduation they opened their own workshops or began working at the workshops of others.

Whether they acted on their own or as members of an organization that provided philanthropic support to those in need and helped the army, Ottoman women performed crucial and invaluable tasks when their service was demanded more than ever by the government and society to heal the wounds opened by years of war. Women not only often acted as intermediaries in the government's attempts to provide welfare for its people but also intervened wherever the state failed to perform its duties. Doing their duty at a time of crisis, women not only demonstrated how much they had to contribute to the alleviation of poverty and misery in society but also justified their increasing mobility and visibility in public in the eyes of many, because their activities were aimed at saving the nation.

THE IMPACT OF THE WAR ON WOMEN

Women's Employment

Whether they lived in urban areas or in the countryside, Ottoman women felt the impact of the war, which both created major difficulties and provided significant opportunities for them. Already burdened by the problems created by the Italian War and then the Balkan Wars, women had to endure even more hardships during World War I, such as hunger, disease, and poverty. As their husbands, fathers, and brothers took off for war, got wounded, or died on the battlefield, thousands of women lost their only or primary means of support and had to find ways to sustain their lives.

Some of these women found work through government measures such as the Zirai Mükellefiyet Kanunu (Agricultural Obligation Law), dated September 18, 1916. Trying to alleviate the shortage of labor due to the conscription of hundreds of thousands of men, the government declared that all women and the men who were not called to arms could be required to do agricultural work for eight hours a day. Employed by the government to increase agricultural production, many women started doing farmwork in villages, which they were not necessarily accustomed to. Women who had been farmers before the war continued to work in the fields.

Suddenly finding themselves in the position of head of the house-hold and having to provide for their kids and sometimes for old relatives, women resorted to different methods to improve their finances. While those who lost their husbands or fathers in the war went to court to demand their share of the inheritance, others petitioned the court to get alimony from their male relatives who were left behind until the breadwinner of the family returned home.³¹ Other women applied to be put on a salary by the government for the duration of the war. Even though some

women were successful in their attempts, they often had to go through a long and difficult process to get what they wanted. The most common problems that these women had to deal with were having to prove the death of their loved ones with documents or witnesses, completing paperwork, long court proceedings, and relatives who were unwilling to cooperate.³²

In order to make ends meet some women took over their husbands' or fathers' shops and started working as artisans, whereas others became factory workers or sold supplies in markets. Elizabeth Thompson mentions that lower-class women in Syria had to take daily risks to feed their families not only by trading in the forbidden black market but also by staging risky demonstrations against the government to demand bread.³³ Entertaining men and prostitution were other ways in which some women tried to earn their livelihood.³⁴

The government felt the need to open İslam Kadınlarını Çalıştırma Cemiyeti (Society for the Employment of Muslim Women), which received 14,000 applications within a few months of its founding in 1916, testifying to the gravity of the situation especially for lower-class and lower-middle-class women.³⁵ In an attempt to alleviate these women's misery, the organization not only created or found jobs for women but also assisted them in finding husbands through newspaper ads and provided accommodation, food, and clothes. The women who found employment through this organization mostly worked as cooks, janitors, tailors, factory workers, secretaries, and clerks.³⁶ Alan Duben and Cem Behar state that many Muslim women came to occupy the positions previously held by their non-Muslim counterparts in part through the activities of the society and the official patronage of the authorities. Tanin proudly noted this development on August 12, 1916, by writing that "many lower- and even middle-class Muslim women of Istanbul were, like their non-Muslim counterparts, contributing to the imperial war effort and participating more fully in the social and economic life of the capital city."³⁷

"The extraordinary inflation and plummeting of real wages" (which mostly hurt those who lived on a fixed wage or salary, particularly the bureaucratic class) as well as the desire to become more involved in social and economic life accelerated the integration of upper-class and upper-middle-class women into the workforce as well.³⁸ In order to contribute to the family budget, fill the positions left by men who were mobilized for the ongoing war, and pursue their personal interests, increasing numbers of women for the first time started careers in education, health, trade, government, and service industries as teachers, school principals,

nurses, clerks, secretaries, accountants, editors, typists, telephone operators, saleswomen, shopkeepers, and hotelkeepers.³⁹ Accordingly, the number of female workers and civil servants in Istanbul exceeded seven thousand in 1916.⁴⁰

As the difficulties and necessities of war forced thousands of women to fend for themselves in the absence of men and many men to depend more on the earnings of their female relatives, the number of female-headed households increased. Men lost their status as the sole breadwinner in the house, which gradually changed the traditional division of labor within the family. While ideas about the benefits of women's employment "had floated before the war, the years of deprivation and trauma appear to have made these ideas more acceptable." This led many men to allow their wives, sisters, and daughters to work outside the home and even to engage in "various trades that had been the sole prerogative of males until then." Thus the economic hardships and labor shortage aggravated by World War I caused many Muslim women to gain more freedom of movement and autonomy.

Women's Education

Trying to rejuvenate a state whose borders were quickly shrinking, whose population was mostly illiterate, whose economy was dependent on foreigners, and whose resources were exhausted by interminable wars, the government was in dire need of educated, dynamic, capable, hardworking, and patriotic people who were willing to render their services to the nation. The Unionists intensified their efforts and tried several methods to improve women's education during World War I. Even though the government was preoccupied with war and economic conditions were deteriorating, the number of girls' schools as well as the number of women attending and graduating from these schools continued to increase in the Ottoman Empire between 1914 and 1918.

In addition to continuing to raise the number of girls' *mektebs* (primary schools) and *rüşdiyes* (secondary schools) around the empire, ⁴⁴ the government opened five lycee-level schools for girls during the war years, including İnas Sanayi-i Nefise Mektebi (1914), an art school focused on painting and sculpting, and Ameli Ticaret İnas Şubesi (1917), which trained students in commerce, book keeping, typing, calculating, Turkish, and French. ⁴⁵ In order to fill the open positions at the newly opened mektebs, rüşdiyes, and *idadis* (high schools) the government opened new Teacher's Training Colleges as well, which had 1,005 students in 1918. Among the graduates of these schools were prominent women such as

Nakiye Hanım, who worked for the Ministries of Education and Pious Foundations along with Halide Edip as a teacher, a general director, and an inspector.⁴⁶

The government's efforts to reach more girls and women by opening new schools and improving the existing ones stemmed from the desire to compete with the schools established by foreigners and minorities in different parts of the empire as much as from the increasing need for educated personnel and mothers.⁴⁷ Aware of the potential of education to produce qualified, loyal, and progressive citizens and fearful (even in time of peace) of the impact of Westerners' and minorities' schools on people's way of life, thought, and identification, the government regarded the girls' schools as well as boys' schools "as a pawn in a larger battle" and as institutions that could eliminate the threat to the existence of the empire.⁴⁸

Cemal Paşa's attempt during World War I to replace the schools operated by the French and missionaries in Lebanon, Beirut, and Damascus is a significant example of the government's attitude in this matter. Believing that educational activities, just like political and economic activities, constituted an influential force against growing Arab nationalism and cultural imperialism in Syria and trying to prevent the Arabs in the region from attending foreign schools, Cemal Paşa sent a letter in 1916 to Halide Edip, whom he considered "the source of pride for Turkish women," and invited her to Syria to help him make the necessary preparations for the new schools he wanted to open. 49 Upon receiving this invitation, Edip visited Syria and Beirut and wrote a detailed report of inspections in the area. She suggested that Lebanon, Beirut, and Damascus be united under a single education system and that a primary school with six grades be established in each area. The mission of these schools (which would teach three languages: Arabic, Turkish, and French) would be to prepare students for higher-level schools and colleges.

Having submitted the report, Halide Edip returned to Istanbul in mid-September. Two months later Cemal Paşa sent her another letter and requested that she come to the area as soon as possible. Along with fifty women who had previously worked and excelled at endowment schools and a few male educators, Halide Edip departed for Damascus in mid-December and arrived there at the end of the month. She later visited Beirut as well to implement the education project initiated by Cemal Paşa. Due to intense efforts, the schools started functioning toward the end of January, including regular and boarding schools for girls and trade schools that served more than three thousand women. Unfortunately,

this project was cut short: first Halide Edip and then Cemal Paşa had to leave Syria. ⁵⁰

During World War I Ottoman society also witnessed the opening of the doors of the darülfünun to women (1914).⁵¹ The female students of the university started meeting at the lecture hall four times a week and heard lectures from professors on history, economy, sociology, women's rights, women's health, domestic affairs, nature, pedagogy, and science.⁵² There was so much interest in these lectures that a few months later they were moved from the lecture hall at the university to a building belonged to Darülmuallimat-1 Aliye (Teachers Training College for Girls), where the students started receiving three years of education in literature, mathematics, or nature. In 1917 twenty-one women graduated from the university.⁵³ Even though some of the courses offered in the schools established for girls focused on women's traditional roles as wives and mothers, others (ranging from social and natural sciences to courses on trade) enabled women to pursue professional careers outside the home and assume new roles in society as self-sufficient individuals.

Moreover, the government started sending female students to Europe for education during World War I. Among these students were Sueda Hanım and Suat Hanım from İzmir, who went to Switzerland.⁵⁴ Refika Hanım and Safiye Ali went to Germany to study medicine, because the Medical School in Istanbul did not accept girls at the time.⁵⁵ Graduating from Würzburg University Medical School with the help of the scholarship provided by the Ministry of Education, Safiye Ali (1894–?) returned home in 1921, becoming the first Turkish female doctor.

As evidenced by these developments as well as hundreds of writings in the Ottoman press, during World War I women's education and women's employment came to be regarded more positively by many due to the need to maximize the human resources in the country. Spending a lot of time, energy, and money in the midst of war to provide women with better education and the training they needed to undertake vital tasks in society, the government aimed to increase the number of people it could depend on. But it also enabled thousands of women to emerge as strong and independent individuals, endowed with the knowledge and skills for active participation in social and economic life.

Women's Journals and Organizations

Another impact of World War I was the suspension of the publication of many women's journals and the activities of some women's organizations. As was the case in Egypt, World War I brought down many journals due

mainly to shortages and soaring prices in different parts of the Ottoman Empire. ⁵⁶ The most prominent example was *Kadınlar Dünyası* (Women's World), the longest-lasting and most influential women's periodical of the constitutional period, which had at least three thousand subscribers.⁵⁷ Kadınlar Dünyası had to stop its publication for four years during the war not only because of the increasing cost of printing and the difficulty in finding the necessary supplies but also because of its columnists' decision to get actively involved in the war effort. These women, who were also among the founders and members of Osmanlı Müdafaa-i Hukuk-u Nisvan Cemiyeti (Ottoman Society for the Defense of Women's Rights), thought they would be doing a greater service to their country by working as nurses or for philanthropic and patriotic organizations rather than writing articles for a periodical.⁵⁸ Their choice to dedicate their time and energy to patriotic activities was not unusual: the defense of the country in World War I became the priority of most female intellectuals and activists at the time. Hence women came to play a bigger role in national organizations, such as Donanma Cemiyeti (Navy Society), Müdafaa-i Milliye Cemiyeti (National Defense Society), and Hilal-i Ahmer Cemiyeti (Red Crescent Society), resulting in the suspension of the activities of some women's rights organizations. This did not mean that women stopped their struggle for women's rights, as seen in the next section of this chapter.

WOMEN'S WRITINGS ABOUT WAR

Studies on the prewar period in the Ottoman Empire clearly demonstrate a great concern among the elite about the empire's fate. ⁵⁹ Long and heated debates took place both in political circles and in the press about the reasons for the empire's weakness and how it could be strengthened. The main conclusion drawn from these debates was that sooner or later the Ottomans would have to fight to survive. The threats facing the empire could only be eliminated with the help of educated, conscious, hard-working, self-denying, and patriotic people who did not give up in the face of hardships and were united around the idea of serving and defending their country. ⁶⁰ Having agreed on these points, the male politicians and intellectuals also discussed the political, military, economic, and ideological aspects of the war.

Unlike the writings of their male counterparts, which dealt with various issues, women's writings about war had a clear focus: the role that women can and should play in national salvation. Whether discussing

the reasons behind the defeat in the Balkan Wars or the various ways in which Ottomans could recover and reclaim their glory, the female intellectuals and activists of the early twentieth century explained how women could solve the problems that left the country so vulnerable to foreign threats. Referring to the empire's needs and arguing that it was women who held the nation's destiny in their hands, these women called their counterparts to action. They appealed to the governments and women of foreign countries. ⁶¹ They also attempted to raise hard-working and patriotic children. ⁶² In addition they emphasized the changes that had to be introduced regarding women's status in society so that they could fulfill their potential.

In an article entitled "The Hands That Rock the Cradle Will Rise," Iffet Hanim tied the nation's future to the education of its women. Women in Turkey were not adorned with knowledge and talent and lived in ignorance, so the men that they raised could not defend the homeland: "History proves to us that the nations whose women are elevated rise to the highest ranks of civilization and the nations whose women have become silent are destroyed.... Just as women have a lot to do with Turkey's misery, they have a role in its elevation as well. Today it is women, the mothers, who will save Turkey."

According to the female intellectuals of the time, the most important attribute that educated mothers could give their children was the feeling of patriotism. While İffet Hanım told "mothers of the future" that they could perform a great service for their homeland by raising new generations who love their homeland and do not hesitate to make any sacrifices for it, ⁶⁴ Hilmiye Hilmi declared: "It is women who raise men, make them pronounce their first word, and provide them with the first education about the homeland.... If a child learns or is taught how to love his family and his hearth and how to defend it, when he grows up...he will love and defend his nation and homeland, which constitutes a bigger family, with great fondness and passion." ⁶⁵

Repeating the same sentiment, Bedia Kamuran stated: "Woman is a creature that leads the nation to progress and retreat, or, in better words, that causes catastrophe or felicity.... If the level of knowledge of a nation's women is high that nation can reach the final stage of progress. A nation whose women live in ignorance is destined for a disappointing downfall and a terrible destruction." Like Iffet Hanım and Hilmiye Hilmi, Kamuran emphasized women's role as mothers and argued that children would greatly benefit if women conditioned them from the day they were born to love their country and to sacrifice their lives for it if necessary. "The

women of progressive nations raise their kids as true patriots. One of these nations, for example, is France. A woman in France sings lullabies to her child that say your homeland is Alsace-Lorraine; grow up so that you can save that sacred country from the hands of the enemy and sacrifice your life if necessary. In this way she instills in that child's mind what the homeland is and raises him to love his homeland."66

To prove her point, Bedia Kamuran also narrated an event that supposedly took place in Japan. According to the story, a young man requested to do his military service but was denied because his mother had no one else to take care of her. When he heard the news, he became very angry and blamed his mother for losing the chance to fulfill his duty to his homeland. Upon hearing this, his mother took a knife and stabbed herself, uttering the following words: "If I'm an obstacle that prevents you from doing your military service, I will kill myself. You will go now without any hesitation and regret." Kamuran believed that this story demonstrated that Japan owed the level of its progress to its women and that Ottoman women could do the same for their country by telling their children, in their lullabies, not to grow up to be beys or paşas anymore but to be soldiers who would not hesitate to die for their homeland: "A nation that is devoid of love for its homeland is like a soulless corpse and a soldier without a weapon." 67

Kamuran then explained how women could raise their children as patriots:

Because we are a nation that is coming out of a big disaster, we are in need of real patriots today. That's why I'm calling Ottoman women to a great service. That is to tell our children the story of the thousands of murders that took place in Rumelia and to help these tragedies to make an impression like paintings in the minds of our tiny children. We should instill in their thoughts the idea of revenge by telling them the calamities of the houses that have been destroyed and ruined. If the French lament this much for Alsace-Lorraine, which is much smaller than the lands that we lost, no matter how much we lament for Rumelia it will not be enough."⁶⁸

Bedia Kamuran was not the only woman to establish a close link between patriotism and the feeling of revenge. In fact words like "grudge" and "revenge" came to be used repeatedly in women's writings during this period. Identifying the lack of a thirst for revenge as the main

reason behind the Ottomans' failures against their enemies, the editors of Kadınlar Dünyası claimed that it was revenge that kept a nation alive. Ottoman youths had not been taught these feelings and did not feel love for their ancestors or homeland, while enemy youths had been raised since childhood with songs about revenge, marches about grudges, and stories about their ancestors, homeland, and enemies. It was only natural that their enemies defeated the Ottomans. If the Ottomans wanted to raise heroes who would defend their country tirelessly and successfully with everything they had, their mothers had to be educated just like their counterparts in other countries. It was women who instilled these sublime feelings in their children. Only those mothers who had studied history and geography could have national awareness and raise their kids as true patriots. That is why it was necessary for women to attend schools, go to the theater, listen to lectures, and visit museums to learn about civilization and to reach an awakening. Just like mothers of the past, they should send their children to war willingly and happily instead of crying, trembling, and having difficulty in letting them leave.⁶⁹

In an article about the Balkan Wars entitled "Why Did We Get Defeated?" Feride İzzet Selim argued that the reason behind the defeat of the Ottomans, who were superior to their enemies in terms of material and military power, was their moral weakness. This resulted from lack of national and civil education. While Ottomans were lazy and ignorant, lacked the feeling of attachment to their homeland, and regarded educating their girls as unnecessary, educated women of other nations were infusing their children with love of independence and feelings of revenge, which allowed them to take the beautiful lands of Rumelia away from the Ottomans.⁷⁰

The most striking article about the concept of revenge and the role it played in creating strong nations is probably the one written by Aziz Haydar. Approaching the issue from a different perspective, she wrote:

Personal grudges can be forgotten, but national grudges cannot and should not. The blood of our victims in Rumelia has not even dried yet. The corpses of our dead have not rotted. The lifeless but open eyes of small babies who have died prematurely are looking at us; their forever closed lips are addressing us and saying: Oh citizens, don't you have a father, a sibling, or a child? Don't you hold grudges against those who murdered them? Would not you take revenge from those who have torn them into pieces? Who am I? Am I not your sibling, your child? I entrusted to God my house,

my home, my work, and my child in a calm corner of Anatolia and have kept guard for years shivering under the snowy ice of the Balkans. While you were sleeping in your warm bed in peace with your family...and enjoying yourself, I protected your honor and property by snuggling with my rifle. I watched out for your life and your child. And I also gave away my life, which was the only thing I had. I am now resigning from this world, fate has not even granted me a grave or a shroud.... While my bones are cracking under the knees of wild animals without a grave and a shroud in the nameless deserts of the Balkans, my soul demands one last favor from you, which is to take revenge on those enemies who have put us in this situation.... Revenge my sister, revenge my child, revenge! Don't forget about my revenge, oh Turkish women! Don't forget about my revenge, oh Turkish girl.... I expect from you humanity and greatness. I expect from you hatred for enemies. I expect from you revenge and animosity.... Avoid giving them the money that your father and husband gained with the sweat of their brow. Because one day it will become a bullet and hit you in the heart.... This is our martyrs' call to us. But do we hear it?...Do we give them an ear? No, we are still giving our money to certain institutions to be sent to our enemies and to be returned to us as bombs.71

While Aziz Haydar drew attention to the economic aspect of the war by referring to women's role in defending their country as consumers rather than as mothers, the editors of Kadınlar Dünyası discussed how women could help the army and whether they could serve as soldiers in an article entitled "Askerlik ve Kadınlar" (Military Service and Women). Even though Islamic history provided many examples of women who had gone on military campaigns and participated in battles, and those who had studied contemporary armies concluded that they were highly dependent on women, it was difficult for women to serve as soldiers. Their bodies were weak and could not endure hardships as men could. Women could not become soldiers but could help the army in other ways, the most important of which was giving birth to children who were capable of serving as soldiers, which was no less dangerous than fighting on the battlefield. Just as armies needed capable and healthy soldiers, it needed strong and healthy women who could give birth to them and even personally accompany the army during wartime. In order to raise these types of women, however, special attention had to be paid to women's physical

education. Complaining about the problems that Ottoman women experienced due to lack of physical exercise and listing the various physical activities of Western women, such as running, riding horses and bicycles, playing tennis, and hunting, the editors of *Kadınlar Dünyası* stated that opening gymnastic clubs for women would be a great service to the nation, because active women who had healthy bodies could both raise strong soldiers and follow the army to the battlefield.⁷²

Another point that *Kadınlar Dünyası* drew attention to, by reprinting Mahmud Sadık's article on feminism, was the need for trained female health personnel in the country. Mahmud Sadık argued that Ottomans had to eliminate the ignorance and bigotry that had prevented them from going forward in order to be successful in the economic and social war that affected the whole world. The way to do that was to give girls and boys equal chances for education, to train female teachers, and to establish higher institutions of learning for women, the most important of which was a faculty of medicine. This was essential not only as a matter of equal rights but also, and more importantly, as a matter of life and existence for the country. Mahmud Sadık asked what good it would do to spend large amounts of money to defend or build the country while thousands of women died prematurely in different parts of the country due to lack of female health personnel. Expressing the view that only female doctors and midwives could penetrate homes and families and thus understand and cure the problems that affected the population, Mahmud Sadık explained why Ottomans needed educated women, especially in the field of medicine.⁷³

Along the same line, Ulviye Mevlan stated that the bodies of thousands of women were rotting under the soil due to the lack of female doctors, when they could be raising future generations: "While the whole world complains about the decrease in population and the jeopardy that their homeland is in, how can we be indifferent and insensitive spectators to the unnatural and untimely deaths of hundreds of thousands of mothers here?"⁷⁴

As it should be clear from these examples, drawing on the popular arguments of the time that tied the empire's destiny to its people's hard work, patriotism, and sacrifice, the female intellectuals of the late Ottoman era chose to emphasize the contributions that women could make to the empire's survival and almost exclusively focused on issues related to women in their writings about war. Discussing women's role in producing prospective soldiers, raising patriotic generations, building a strong nation, protecting national resources, strengthening the army, increasing

the population, and thus leading the country to progress and victory, they argued that the Ottoman Empire could escape the grave situation that it was in if the position of its women could be elevated. This required eliminating the customs and changing the policies that had kept them oppressed for centuries.

CONCLUSION

World War I was a time of immense hardship for everyone involved, leading to death, destruction, epidemics, hunger, and poverty. It was also a war of salvation, a matter of life or death for Ottomans, as many intellectuals stated in their writings and speeches. To Moreoever, preceded by the Italian War and the Balkan Wars, World War I marked the culmination of the militarization of Ottoman society, in which children were imagined as brave and selfless soldiers and women as heroic mothers who sent their sons to death without blinking an eye. Defense and survival had become Ottomans' main concern, which meant mobilization of the whole population. This included women, who constituted the largest group of noncombatants in society.

Ottoman women were not expected to fight or to sacrifice their lives like men, but they were supposed to produce future fighters; be willing to sacrifice loved ones; and work tirelessly, often under difficult circumstances, to revitalize the economy, fulfill the needs of the army, and take care of the poor, the sick, and the wounded. Through their capacity to bear children, their labor, and their dedicated service, which formed the basis of women's demands for equal rights in various parts of the world, women were expected to and did participate in the war effort.

Despite all the problems, suffering, pain, and hardships that it brought about, the war offered women in the Ottoman Empire as in Europe "new opportunities for education, employment, and national service" and helped them achieve some gains. References to motherhood provided women with probably the most effective means of justification to extend both their living space and their sphere of influence during the war, because it offered them a status almost equivalent to that of the soldier. Women performed invaluable services in the public sphere for national salvation in different capacities and used the war to criticize the ethnic, religious, and patriarchal customs that left women and consequently the nation weak compared to their enemies. Ottoman women found new channels through which they could actively get involved in national affairs and improved their status with the new responsibilities that they acquired in society.

NOTES

- 1. Susan Grayzel, Women's Identities at War, 2, 7.
- 2. Some notable exceptions to this approach are Maurine Weiner Greenwald, Women, War, and Work; Gail Braybon, Women Workers in the First World War: The British Experience (London: Croom Helm 1981); Richard Wall and J. M. Winter, eds., The Upheaval of War: Family, Work, and Welfare in Europe, 1914–1918 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988); Grayzel, Women's Identities at War; Mary Louise Roberts, Civilization without Sexes: Reconstructing Gender in Postwar France, 1917–1927 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994); Susan Pedersen, Family, Dependence, and the Origins of the Welfare State: Britain and France, 1914–1945 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Kathleen Kennedy, Disloyal Mothers and Scurrilous Citizens: Women and Subversion during World War I (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999); Roger Chickering and Stig Förster, eds. *Great War, Total War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Margaret H. Darrow, French Women and the First World War (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2000); Angela K. Smith, The Second Battlefield: Women, Modernism, and the First World War (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2000); Jean Ebbert and Marie-Beth Hall, *The First, the Few, the Forgotten:* Navy and Marine Corps Women in World War I (Annapolis: U.S. Naval Institute Press, 2002); Lettie Gavin, American Women in World War I: They Also Served (Niwot: University Press of Colorado; 2006); David S. Patterson, *The Search for* Negotiated Peace: Women's Activism and Citizen Diplomacy in World War I (New York: Routledge; 2008); Kimberly Jensen, Mobilizing Minerva: American Women in the First World War (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008).
- 3. Besim Ömer Paşa (1862–1940) was an important physician who was known for his contributions to the Ottoman Red Crescent Society. For more information on him, see Besim Ömer Paşa, *Hanımefendilere Hilal-i Ahmer-e Dair Konferans*.
- 4. Safiye Hüseyin Elbi (1880–1964) was the daughter of vice-admiral Ahmed Besim Paşa, a naval attaché in London. Working as a nurse until the end of her life, Safiye Hüseyin Elbi performed great services with Besim Ömer Paşa during wartime and even represented the Red Crescent Society in Europe. Zühal Özaydın, "Start of Nursing in Turkey and Excerpts from Its Development in the Last Thirty Years"; Lale Uçan and Güldane Çolak, *Kadın Öncüler*, 120.
- 5. The following women successfully completed the training program offered between February and June 1914: Belkis Cemal, Belkis Halih, Belkis Ragib, Servet Şakir, Halet Şakir, Halime Halim, Hatice İbrahim, Hatice Agah, Remize Cemal, Sadiye Halil, Seniha Rauf, Saadet Şakir, Saadet Cemal, Sabiha Hakkı, Talat Süreyya, Ayşe Süreyya, Aliye Ali Rıza, Fahire Sezai, Leya Vahid, Leyla Yusuf Razi, Münire İsmail, Macide Besim, Mehri Basri, Mebruke Memduh, Mebrure Bekir, Naile Hamdi, and Naime Hasib. Besim Ömer Paşa, Hanımefendilere Hilal-i Ahmer-e Dair Konferans, 156–57.
- 6. These lectures, dated January 27, 1914, were originally published in 1915. Besim Ömer Paşa, *Hanımefendilere Hilal-i Ahmer-e Dair Konferans*; Nil Sarı and Zühal Özaydın, "Dr. Besim Ömer Pasha ve Kadın Hastabakıcı Eğitiminin Nedenleri (I)"; Özaydın, "Start of Nursing."
- 7. Besim Ömer Paşa, Hanımefendilere Hilal-i Ahmer-e Dair Konferans, 227.

- 8. Ibid., 179.
- 9. Sami Korkmaz, "Birinci Dünya Savaşı Yıllarında Balıkesirde Sosyal Hayat," 85.
- Fatma Züleyha, Hastabakıcılık (Istanbul: Matbaa-i Hayriye ve Şürekası, 1915); Sarı and Özaydın, "Dr. Besim Ömer Pasha," 15.
- 11. Korkmaz, "Birinci Dünya Savaşı Yıllarında Balıkesirde Sosyal Hayat," 85.
- 12. Helmut Becker, *Birinci Dünya Savaşında Osmanlı Cephesinde Askeri Tababet ve Eczacılık*, cited in Muharrem Uçar, "Birinci Dünya Savaşında Türk Ordularındaki Sağlık Hizmetlerinin Arşiv Belgeleri Işığında Değerlendirilmesi," 129.
- 13. Uçan and Çolak, Kadın Öncüler, 120.
- 14. Özaydın, "Start of Nursing," 260.
- 15. Ibid.
- The poem was completed on March 20, 1917, and dedicated to the Hilal-i Ahmer Hanımları (Ladies of the Red Crescent). Erol Köroğlu, Ottoman Propaganda and Turkish Identity, 136.
- Yavuz Selim Karakışla, "Enver Paşa'nın Kurdurduğu Kadın Birinci İşçi Taburu";
 Cengiz Mutlu, "Osmanlı Arşiv Belgelerine Göre Amele Taburları (1914–1918)."
- 18. Karakışla, "Enver Paşa'nın Kurdurduğu Kadın Birinci İşçi Taburu," 16–17.
- 19. Ibid., 20
- Each woman in the battalion was given a jacket, a cloak, a headscarf, a water bottle, a bread-bag, a pillowcase, a portable tent, a rug, a pair of socks, and underwear. Ibid., 18.
- 21. The army was planning gradually to replace the commander and the male officers in the battalion with women but did not have enough time to put this plan into practice. Ibid., 17.
- 22. Mutlu, "Osmanlı Arşiv Belgelerine Göre Amele Taburları," 86.
- Elizabeth Thompson, Colonial Citizens, 26 (quotation); Zafer Toprak, "The Family, Feminism, and the State," 448–49.
- 24. Kadınlar Dünyası, "Askerlik ve Kadınlar," *Kadınlar Dünyası* 148 (June 21, 1913): 2.
- Thompson, Colonial Citizens, 26; Şefika Kurnaz, II.Meşrutiyet Döneminde Türk Kadını, 86–89.
- 26. Kurnaz, II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Türk Kadını, 198–201.
- 27. Among the most notable members of Asker Ailelerine Yardımcı Hanımlar Cemiyeti were the wives of Otto Liman von Sanders, the chief of the German Military Mission and the commander of the Ottoman First Army; İsmail Canbulad, the director of the General Security Department; Bedri Bey, the police chief of Istanbul; Hikmet Bey, the chief of the press department; and Selim Sırrı Bey, the inspector of education. Mehmet Beşikçi, "Between Voluntarism and Resistance," 180. Şehit Ailelerine Yardım Birliği was founded by Nakiye Hanım (1882–1954), who was one of the most prominent female educators and activists of the time. For more information on her, see Uçan and Çolak, *Kadın Öncüler*, 93–95.
- 28. Beşikçi, "Between Voluntarism and Resistance," 181.
- 29. Uçan and Çolak, Kadın Öncüler, 53.
- Levent Kaya Ocakaçan, "Birinci Dünya Savaşında Şirket-i Hayriye," 25. According
 to Ocakaçan, the number of men serving in the military had reached approximately 2,850,000 by 1918.
- 31. Korkmaz, "Birinci Dünya Savaşı Yıllarında Balıkesirde Sosyal Hayat," 127.

- Burcu Yıldırım, "Birinci Dünya Savaşı Sırasında Asker Ailelerine Devletin Yaptığı Yardımlar."
- 33. Thompson, Colonial Citizens, 26.
- 34. Korkmaz, "Birinci Dünya Savaşı Yıllarında Balıkesirde Sosyal Hayat," 110–11.
- İslam Kadınlarını Çalıştırma Cemiyeti was established in 1916 under the presidency of Enver Paşa and the auspices of his wife, Nakiye Hanım. Alan Duben and Cem Behar, *Istanbul Households*, 44–45.
- 36. Mutlu, "Osmanlı Arşiv Belgelerine Göre Amele Taburları," 82.
- 37. Tanin quoted in Duben and Behar, Istanbul Households, 44.
- 38. Ibid., 200.
- 39. Kurnaz, II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Türk Kadını; Thompson, Colonial Citizens, 36.
- 40. Kurnaz, II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Türk Kadını, 123.
- 41. Thompson, Colonial Citizens, 26.
- 42. Ibid., 37.
- 43. Duben and Behar, Istanbul Households, 200.
- 44. The number of girls' rüşdiyes increased from 85 in 1907 to 116 in 1918. In 1907 there were 405 boys', 85 girls', and 25 coed rüşdiyes. Kurnaz, II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Türk Kadını. 81.
- 45. These schools were located in Erenköy, Çamlıca, and Kandilli. Ibid., 84.
- 46. Halide Edip Adıvar, *Memoirs of Halide Edip*, 350–51.
- 47. Benjamin Fortna, Imperial Classroom.
- 48. Ibid., 43–44. Fortna argues that Ottomans believed that students would "naturally incline toward the state from whose schools they have emerged" (55) and that, "with sufficient controls in place to ensure that the Ottoman brand of education was practiced," they regarded educating the people "as tantamount to turning out loyal soldiers the war against the enemies of the state" (66).
- 49. Nevzat Artuç, Cemal Paşa, 279-81.
- 50. Ibid.
- 51. Coeducation at the university started in 1918–19. Kurnaz, *II.Meşrutiyet Döneminde Türk Kadını*, 104.
- 52. History was taught by Ihsan Bey, women's health and first aid by Dr. Besim Ömer, economy and home economics by Ahmed Cevdet, sociology by Salih Zeki, natural sciences by Said Bey, women's rights by Mahmut Esat, and pedagogy by İsmail Hakkı Bey. Ibid., 102.
- 53. Eight of them graduated from the Department of Literature, three from the Department of Mathematics, and ten from the Department of Natural Sciences. Ibid., 102–3.
- 54. Kurnaz, II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Türk Kadını, 105.
- 55. Kadınlar Dünyası, "Birinci Sene-i Devriye Münasebetiyle," *Kadınlar Dünyası* 138 (April 4, 1330): 6; Uçan and Çolak, *Kadın Öncüler*, 25–26.
- 56. Beth Baron, The Women's Awakening in Egypt, 34.
- 57. The publication of *Kadınlar Dünyası* had to be suspended three times: for three months after the publication of the 153rd issue; for four years between 1914 and 1918 because of World War I; and for three years between late 1918 and 1921 after it resumed publication on March 2, 1918. Serpil Çakır, *Osmanlı Kadın Hareketi*, 80–81.

- 58. M. Hıfzı, "Soma'dan Alınan Mektub," *Kadınlar Dünyası* 169 (April 13, 1918): 8.
- To learn more about these debates, see Köroğlu, Ottoman Propaganda; and Mustafa Aksakal, Harb-i Umumi Eşiğinde Osmanlı.
- 60. Aksakal, Harb-i Umumi Eşiğinde Osmanlı, 26–30.
- 61. "Türk Kadınına Açık Mektup," Türk Kadını 13 (November 28, 1918): 207.
- 62. Cahide Cevdet, "Hukuk-u Nisvan," *Kadınlık* 10 (June 1914): 5–6.
- 63. İffet Hanım, "Beşiği Sallayan Eller Yükselecek," *Seyyale* 1 (June 4, 1914): 10–11.
- 64. Ibid.
- 65. Hilmiye Hilmi, "Aziz Haydar Hanım Efendi'ye İthaf," *Kadınlar Dünyası* 130 (February 8, 1914): 5–6.
- 66. Bedia Kamuran, "Osmanlı Kadınlığının Ulvi Vazifeleri," *Kadınlar Dünyası* 133 (March 1, 1914): 5–6.
- 67. Ibid.
- 68. Ibid.
- 69. Kadınlar Dünyası, "Kadınlık," *Kadınlar Dünyası* 132 (February 22, 1914): 6.
- 70. Feride İzzet Selim, "Neden Mağlup Olduk?" *Kadınlar Dünyası* 141 (April 25, 1914): 11.
- 71. Aziz Haydar, "Kinimizi Unutmayalım," Kadınlar Dünyası 142 (May 2, 1914): 4.
- 72. Kadınlar Dünyası, "Askerlik ve Kadınlar," Kadınlar Dünyası 148 (June 21, 1913): 2.
- 73. Mahmud Sadık, "Feminizm," Kadınlar Dünyası 152 (July 19, 1914): 8-9.
- 74. Ulviye Mevlan, "Kadın-Tababet," Kadınlar Dünyası 134 (March 8, 1914): 2.
- 75. Halide Edip, "Halâs Muharebesi," *Tanin*, November 28, 1914; Yusuf Akçura: "Almost all Turkish nationalist authors are unanimous in their thinking that the war that we have entered is a just war of salvation": Köroğlu, *Ottoman Propaganda*, 7.
- 76. Grayzel, Women's Identities at War, 2.

Ottoman Muslim Women and Work during World War I

Nicole A. N. M. van Os

"War Work the Emancipator" is the title of a paragraph in Ahmed Emin Yalman's book *Turkey in the World War*. In this paragraph, which is part of his chapter on "the Emancipation of Women," he suggests that the war had an emancipatory effect on what he called "Turkish" women because they took the place of the men who marched off to the battlefields in the workforce. More than fifty years later scholars like Nermin Abadan-Unat and Şirin Tekeli also expressed the idea that war had had an emancipating effect on Turkish women. None of these three authors explicitly state what they actually mean by "emancipation." Implicitly, however, both Tekeli and Yalman connect the emancipation of women directly with their getting a paid job. World War I led to the emancipation of Ottoman women, as Tekeli wrote, because "[it] drew ordinary women [halk kadınları] into a working life."

We might debate whether "emancipation" can be equaled to getting a paid job, but in any case the research on the effect of World War I on "ordinary women" in other countries shows that effects in the (blue-collar) labor market during the war on women and gender are much more complicated than this assumption indicates. Scholars writing on the subject, for example, discovered that the change that took place was not so much that women started to work in paid jobs but a shift in the gender division of labor: women, who in general had been working before, took jobs that men used to do. Others also reject this idea. They argue that women were not able to take up the jobs of skilled male laborers in the war industry, because the women were unskilled. In Germany this led to a lack of cooperation or blank refusal by employers to employ women. They were allowed to call back their skilled laborers from the front instead.

In France, in contrast, the need for higher production led to the rationalization of the production process and the introduction of Taylorism. Unlike the old system, with artisans working on a product as a whole, the production process was cut into small, repetitious pieces that unskilled workers such as women could do. In this case women did not take the jobs of men, but the production process was reformed in such a way that new jobs were created that supposedly suited women better, as Laura Lee Downs argues. She also claims that in Britain the "dilution" of skilled labor was blocked by the labor unions. The artisans accepted the fragmentation of skilled labor into smaller pieces only after a law forced them to and with the promise that the previous conditions would be restored after the war.

Another issue that comes up in the literature on the impact of World War I on women and their families concerns which women experienced changes. Were the changes that took place affecting all women in an equal way and to a similar degree or were some women more affected than others or in different way? Factors like class, ethnic background, and stage in the life cycle might be important parameters in this context. Maurine Weiner Greenwald, for example, argues that the jobs vacated by white women taking men's jobs in the United States were filled in turn by black women.8 Karin Hausen tells us about middle-class German women who were forced to find a paid job for the first time in their life because their husbands had died and their widows' pension was not enough to live on.9 In the same way working-class women who had stopped working after they got married and had their first child were forced to return to the work floor. Maureen Healy points out that middle- and upper-class women in Austria were warned not to do any sewing on a voluntary basis in order not to affect the employability of working-class women negatively, a problem also discussed by Margaret Darrow for France. 10

Whether or not a direct causal connection existed between the changes and the war is still another issue of debate. Some authors argue that the changes were the result of an earlier development and that the war actually was detrimental to the emancipation of women. After the war the changes that had actually started before the war were regarded in retrospect as a result of the war and thus explicitly meant to be only temporary.¹¹

Another question that scholars working on the effects of World War I on women pose is whether or not the changes lasted beyond the war. Did women continue to work in their new jobs or were the changes reversed after the war, as was often the case? Women were simply laid off completely when the men returned from the home front, were forced to

accept lower paid jobs, or at best returned to their former jobs. ¹² Instead of consolidating whatever changes had taken place, women were forced to return to their homes. In order to make up for the loss of personnel, governments followed pronatalist policies that bound women to their homes. Moreover, the prevention of social unrest among the returning soldiers led these governments to take "limiting legislative" measures to oust women from the workforce. ¹³ Protective labor laws regarding working women and children that had been void during the war became valid again after the war. ¹⁴

War thus did not provide women with an entrance ticket to the male domain of (economic) life, in which men and women equally participated. The reality was much more complicated than that, at least for the women in countries like Germany, France, Great Britain, and the United States, as several scholars have shown. To what extent, however, are their findings applicable to the Ottoman Empire? What shifts took place in the Ottoman industrial and manufacturing labor force during World War I? What effect did these shifts have on Ottoman women and on gender? To what extent were these shifts lasting?

While the researchers referred to above used primary sources such as the archives of trade unions, women's labor organizations, social insurance Institutions, or employer's organizations, such materials are lacking in the Ottoman case. The primary materials available for information on manufacturing are Ottoman and foreign newspaper clippings and articles from periodicals (which may have served as propaganda), annual reports of the major state employment agency for women, Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi (Islamic Organization for the Employment of Women) the statistics on industrial enterprises with more than ten workers in 1913 and 1915 published by the Ministry of Trade and Agriculture in 1917, 15 and some references in (auto) biographies. Although the materials thus are rather limited, it is possible to compose a picture out of the bits and pieces available that can contribute to comprehension of the effect of the war on Ottoman (Muslim) women in general and, more specifically, on women belonging to the lower socioeconomic strata.

OTTOMAN MANUFACTURING AND WOMEN ON THE EVE OF WORLD WAR I

It is difficult to paint a clear picture of the industrial sector in the late Ottoman Empire. As Roger Owen states, such a picture can at best be an "impressionistic survey of some of the leading sectors." In the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth century the economic and financial ties

between the Ottoman Empire and the West European countries gradually had tightened. The Ottoman Empire had gotten more and more incorporated into a world market system dominated by the European powers. The economic and financial ties between the Ottoman Empire and the European countries were established and reinforced in three different ways. First, the Ottoman Empire was financially integrated with Europe: in the nineteenth century the empire for the first time had to borrow money abroad. Second, foreigners began to invest directly in the empire in projects such as railroads and ports, both investments directed by the requirements of trade. The railroads and ports connected the producers of manufactured goods with their suppliers of raw materials and with their market.

The production of raw materials for the industrializing European countries and the purchase of manufactured goods from them was the third way in which the Ottoman Empire was incorporated in a European-dominated world market system. The empire became a partner in the international division of labor.

This development was triggered when Britain was able to negotiate terms of trade in the 1830s that were favorable to the industrializing European countries and got them formalized in the Free Trade treaties.¹⁷ These treaties weakened the commercial position of the Ottomans: the tariffs on exports and imports, which had been equal until then, were both increased, but the tariffs on imports much less so than the tariffs on exports. Moreover, foreign merchants were exempted from the 8 percent tax on trade between the regions within the empire, while local traders continued to have to pay these taxes. The ad valorem taxation of imports, furthermore, prevented the Ottoman authorities from pursuing an effective import policy. Due to these agreements the Ottoman Empire became a provider of relatively cheap raw materials (especially cotton and foodstuffs) for the industrialized European countries, while the locally handmade textile products could not compete with the machine-made European products, which were of superior quality and cheaper. ¹⁸ The production of halfway products such as silk thread and also high-quality and labor-intensive end products made for the European market such as lace and tapestries increased. These products did not yield as much for the Ottoman economy as they should have, though, because they were partly produced and traded by foreign companies. 19

Still, the increased trade led to the growth of both the agricultural and industrial sector in the Ottoman Empire and resulted in a more prosperous population constituting an expanding market. The growing demand

for consumer goods not only led to an increased import of cheaply produced industrial goods from abroad but also stimulated private investors, both local and foreign, to engage in successful factory-building activities in the urbanized areas of the Ottoman Empire from the 1870s onward, as Donald Quataert points out.²⁰

Despite these activities the number of mechanized factories in the Ottoman Empire remained limited until the very end of the empire. Most of the mechanized factories were situated around Istanbul and some other major cities and by 1914 employed approximately 35,000 workers. These factories were founded and controlled partly by the state, producing not only for the market but also for the military.²¹

The largest share of the goods of the manufacturing sector in the Ottoman Empire on the eve of World War I, however, was produced in workshops of various sizes, while home production also was a major factor. Women were an important part of the labor force in certain branches of the manufacturing sector. Their share was large, for example, in all stages of production of various textiles. Women also formed a dominant part of the labor force in the tobacco industry. ²² Apart from these two branches women were employed in other industries too. World War I brought major transformations for this sector and its employees.

According to Ahmed Emin Yalman, before World War I the Ottoman government already possessed several factories that manufactured various kinds of "war materials." 23 It is not clear, however, what he means by "war materials." In her book on working-class women during World War I in Germany Ute Daniel makes a distinction between "war industries" and "peace industries." In her view war industries include the weapon and ammunition factories. She includes textile production and the foodprocessing industries, even if they were producing for the army, in the peace industries. This distinction, however, does not seem very functional. The purchaser/consumer of those goods rather than the nature of the goods should determine the classification of the industry. Whether or not this production takes place during wartime is irrelevant. Rather than calling a particular industry a war or peace industry, it should be called a military or army industry as opposed to a civil industry. Thus the production of textile goods, such as uniforms and sandbags for the army, at any time should be counted part of that army industry. The tobacco industry should be counted only if the largest part of its production is purchased by the army to distribute among its soldiers. Various parts of the civil industry in the Ottoman Empire were turned into army industries during World War I to equip the Ottoman army and its soldiers.

OTTOMAN MANUFACTURING AND WOMEN DURING WORLD WAR I

During the war years the manufacturing sector was militarized fast: not only did civil industries turn to production for the army, but the Ottoman military itself tried to expand production under its control in an effort to meet the increased demand. For reasons discussed below, this demand became increasingly harder to meet through imports in the course of the war years. Women proved to be an important potential source of labor to be tapped into.

When the army was mobilized in August 1914, the logistics and provisioning were not yet organized. Thus, for example, the men in arms did not have enough uniforms—and the uniforms that were available were meant for the winter.²⁴ Several ways to provide the clothing were used. Orders were placed through the military attaché in Berlin, while an effort was also made to expand local production. In 1914 the Ottomans asked the Germans for 150,000 military cloaks, 150,000 uniforms, and 200,000 pairs of shoes. These goods from the first order, however, never arrived in the Ottoman Empire for three reasons. First, no direct connections were available between Germany and the Ottoman Empire to transport the goods. Second, after the Battle of the Marne the whole German production was used for its own army. Third, the Germans refused to send goods unless the Ottomans would enter the war on their side.²⁵ Only in 1916 were the Germans able to send a limited amount of "clothing, footwear, equipment, and materials for protection from the cold." The total amount of "textiles" sent by the Germans during the war, according to Yılmaz, amounted to 97 wagons of uniforms (elbise), 1 wagon of blankets, 226 chests of socks, and 637 chests of tents.²⁶

This was by far not enough to equip the army, so local production was expanded. One way to create this expansion was to appeal to the patriotic feelings of women and ask them to contribute voluntarily. Another way was to enhance industrial production. The production in existing factories and workshops was increased, while new factories and workshops were opened. An effort was also made to mobilize the potential home industry. This was done partly by the military authorities, partly by private or semiprivate initiatives.

On August 17, 1914, the First Army Corps published an advertisement calling upon "persons of both sexes" to assist in the production of "uniforms, military cloaks, and fur caps [kalpak]" to apply to its depot in Süleimaniye (Istanbul). The advertisement mentioned that it was possible

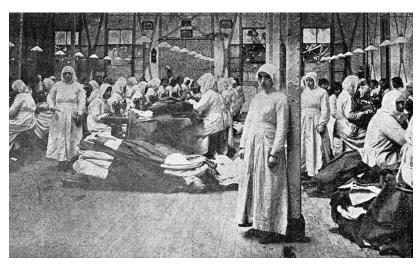


FIGURE 16.1. "A picture of the thankworthy reforms of the Quartermaster General's Department. At the Military Workshop: Muslim and Ottoman ladies aged from twelve to seventy at work sewing uniforms for our soldiers while making a living with an Oriental zeal." *Harb Mecmuasi* 1, no. 11 (Temmuz 1332 [July/August 1916]): 174.

to work both in the depot itself and at home. Those who preferred to work at home needed a certificate from the Board of Elders of their neighborhood, probably to show that they were reliable.²⁷ Charlotte Lorenz mentions that many women got involved in army sewing at home.²⁸ Moreover, in Manisa 1,300 home workers (including 1,000 women) produced cotton cloth at home.²⁹ Little is known about the actual organization of home work. Originally it seems to have been distributed through subcontractors. Irfan Orga mentions in his memoirs, however, that his mother and their neighbor sewed for a subcontractor until the army decided to buy up all the materials needed and started to open army dikimhane (sewing workshops) itself. 30 His mother was left with no other choice but to work at such a workshop in Gülhane. Harb Mecmuasi (July/August 1916) published three photographs (figs. 16.1, 16.2, 16.3) of an askeri dikimhane (military sewing workshop) of unknown location. In two of the photographs groups of women are working on their sewing, by hand and on sewing machines. The third photograph depicts a large room with men in military outfits behind sewing machines. According to the subtitles the women in the photographs were "Muslim and Ottoman women aged between twelve and seventy sewing uniforms for our soldiers." The men behind the sewing machines were supposed to do the



FIGURE 16.2. "All the women in the factory are dressed in white apronlike dresses. Their outdoor black çarşafs are hanging on the wall." *Harb Mecmuası* 1, no. 11 (Temmuz 1332 [July/August 1916]): 174.

first coarse work, after which the uniforms were sent off in little wagons to the women, so that they could give them the finer finishing touch.³¹

Orga's mother received food and a small income and was housed in a dormitory during the week, although she was living in Istanbul and had three children to look after. The workshop where Orga's mother worked might well have been the one shown in figure 16.1 or the one referred to as Sultan Ahmed Elbise Anbarı (Garments' Storehouse) in the first annual report of Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi. 33

The military workshops were not a specific feature of wartime industry. They had been established by the military authorities to meet the increasing demand for military textiles due to the modernizing reforms in the army in the late nineteenth century. The military had been involved in manufacturing for the army from the mid-1800s onward by establishing factories and workshops under military control. The Ministry of War, for example, in 1855 founded a factory in Makriköy that produced cotton thread and cloth. It also opened military sewing workshops, where women were employed. Similar workshops were also established at the vocational schools for girls founded in the second half of the nineteenth century. One such school at Yedikule was opened by Midhat Paşa in 1869, where fifty girls were educated to become seamstresses by getting practical training by sewing uniforms for the army. When this particular

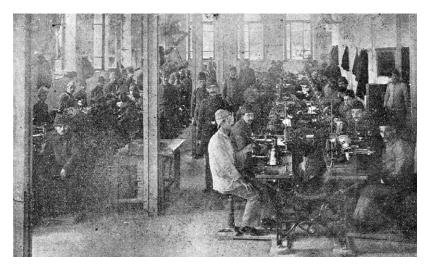


FIGURE 16.3. "A part of the department of the workshop with electrically driven sewing machines. The rough and rapid sewing is done in this department; the remaining fine work is immediately transported to the women's department in Decauville wagons." *Harb Mecmuasi* 1, no. 11 (Temmuz 1332 [July/August 1916]): 174.

school was closed down in 1884, the pupils were sent to the other vocational schools that had been opened for girls in the meantime.

During World War I, however, new factories and workshops were established, while existing private textile factories were put partly (or completely?) under military administration to meet the increasing demand. For example, they were to replace the import of cotton yarn from Britain and India, which had provided 54 percent of the total demand in 1913, with locally produced yarn.³⁷ Women had always formed a large part of the labor force in the textile industries, so the opening of new factories and workplaces potentially offered job opportunities to an increasing number of women. The statistics on industrial enterprises published by the Ministry of Trade and Agriculture in 1917, which cover the years 1913 and 1915, seem to confirm this for the start of the war.

For example, the three cotton yarn and cloth factories existing in 1913 employed a total of 604 laborers, of whom 50 percent were women and children. In 1915 four such factories employed (in addition to 270 soldiers working in the factory in Makriköy) 1,227 laborers, of whom 55.5 percent were women and 14.3 percent children. The number of female workers increased during the war years. In 1916–17, for example, 833 women were employed at the Makriköy factory alone through the mediation of the Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi. The number of female workers in the Makriköy factory alone through the mediation of the Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi.

The wool industry also was important for the military. All the factories producing only yarn (mostly exclusively for the production of carpets) were closed down due to the war. The six factories producing cloth and yarn continued their existence under military administration. The personnel working in these factories increased from 200 in 1913 to 393 in 1915. In 1913 only a few factories employed women. In 1915 their number had increased relatively. In the Feshane and İzmit factories, however, women started to be employed only after 1916. Through the mediation of the Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi 1,140 women were allocated to the Feshane factory between October 1916 and January 1918. Lorenz mentions that by 1917 or 1918 Feshane had a sewing workshop where the total cloth production of the factory was processed. In this shop 80 percent of the workers were women. Many of them were "Turkish" women, who, with their faces veiled, worked under male supervisors.

Apart from the numbers of women and places already mentioned, Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi allocated at least another 2,671 women to other textile enterprises between October 1916 and January 1918 according to its report for the year 1333. 44 Women were sent to Taksim Fanila ve Çorab Fabrikası (Taksim Shirts and Socks Factory) (135),45 Milli Mensucat Şirketi (National Textiles Company) (22), Eyüp Melbusat İmalathanesi (Eyüp Clothes Factory) (1,592), Levazım İplik Fabrikası (Quartermaster General's Yarn Factory) (272), and Ahırkapı Melbusat ve Çadır İmalathanesi (Ahırkapı Clothes and Tents Factory) (250). In June 1918 the organization was still advertising to find 200 women to work at Eyüp Sultan Melbusat İmalathanesi and Defterdar Mensucat Fabrikası (Defterdar Textiles Factory). 46

Furthermore, in 1916–17 another 863 women were employed at the military footwear factory in Beykoz through the organization. When German journalists visited this factory in December 1917, they were surprised by the high number of women and girls working there. *As the statistics show, this factory was already by far the largest of its kind, with a total of 768 personnel in 1915. The statistics, however, do not specify the gender of its personnel. *P Women were employed for the first time in the production of wooden nails for shoes during the early years of the war. The local production of these nails increased, because import was no longer possible. In 1913 one factory that closed down during the war had eighteen male workers, while in 1915 forty males and twenty females worked in two factories, both founded in 1915. One of the larger factories put under military administration was located in Saraçhane. *This might be the factory that the annual report of Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyeti

refers to as the Saraçhane Fabrikası (Saraçhane Factory). In this factory 371 women were employed through Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyeti's agency in 1916–17.⁵¹

Thus during the war years an increasing number of women were employed in the production of textiles and shoes for the army in the factories in Istanbul. The statistics of the Ministry of Trade and Agriculture show, however, that the increases were relatively small for the period 1913 to 1915 in the larger industrial establishments. But other sources reveal that toward the end of 1916 the number of women working in this sector of industry grew much faster. This must have been due to the increasingly limited possibilities to import textile goods, especially from Austria-Hungary, and the efforts to establish a replacement industry.

Women were also active in other segments of the industrial sector that produced for the army and its soldiers. One of these segments was the tobacco industry, which showed a different picture. During the first years of the war the total number of laborers increased, with the number of women increasing more than the number of men. Two factories in Istanbul and İzmir had 1,994 workers including 923 females (46.3 percent) in 1913 and 2,112 workers including 1,086 women (51.4 percent) in 1915. The wages for workers were not specified for the two sexes, but were on average less than 10 kuruş per day.⁵² The Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyeti also allocated women to this industry. A total of 317 women worked there through its agency between October 1916 and January 1918.⁵³ Women and children were also employed in one of its supply industries: making cigarette papers. The total number of laborers declined during the first years of the war. No specifications are given for gender, however, so it is not clear whether or how women were affected. The wages of women and children varied between 2 and 6 kuruş per day, while those of men were between 10 and 15 kuruş per day.⁵⁴ The production of the twelve factories declined and was obviously not sufficient to meet demand. Over the war years three wagonloads of cigarette paper were imported from Germany.55

While it is thus possible to get considerable information on the participation of women in the labor force for the production of these parts of a soldier's equipment (his outfit and his cigarettes), it is more difficult to find data on his weapons. Some of the military factories established by the sultans in the nineteenth century must have served to produce weapons and ammunition. The old Tophane was still producing in the time of World War I, while more weapons were produced at a factory in Zeytinburnu. ⁵⁶ According to Vedat Eldem, the number of laborers in

the weapons industry increased. While 3,000 men were working in this branch before the war, their number had risen to 10,000 by the end of the war.⁵⁷ It is unclear, though, whether any women were involved in this branch. The employees were probably military laborers from the workers' battalions. Through these battalions skilled artisans could be saved from active military service and be put to work in the war industry.⁵⁸ Moreover, German laborers were imported to work at the German-Ottoman arms factories.⁵⁹ References to women working in this particular field are limited. As early as August 1915, however, the İmalat-i Harbiye Müdüriyeti (Directorate of War Production) was advertising that it was looking for women and girls to work as quality controllers of shells at the Zeytinburnu Rifle Factory and at the sewing workshop of the Makriköy Gunpowder Factory.⁶⁰ By February 1916, accordingly, 150 women who had supposedly applied voluntarily were working at the state ammunition factory, while women were employed in the "automobile industry" (Automobilfabrikation), which was producing for the army. 61 By the end of July 1918 Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi was also advertising to find women to work at Makriköy Barut Fabrikası (Makriköy Gunpowder Factory).⁶² But the production fell far short of satisfying the needs of the Ottoman army. Most of the weapons and ammunition as well as means of communication and transport were imported from Austria and Germany. 63

Due to the lack of a male labor force, women were also catapulted into other jobs. For example, a growing number of women started to work in white-collar jobs for both private companies and local and state authorities. The local authorities in due time employed an increasing number of women as civil servants at lower levels as well.⁶⁴ The municipality of Istanbul employed women dressed in special uniforms and trousers as street cleaners. 65 The City Council appointed female civil servants in the district of Üsküdar. Women were employed as toll collectors at the Galata bridge, while at the Disinfecting Stations of Istanbul, Üsküdar, and Tophane women were hired at 400 kuruş per month. 66 The Municipality of İzmir employed women in its garbage collector and building services.⁶⁷ The Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi served as mediator for the districts of Beyoğlu and Istanbul in finding 800 "ladies" (hanım) for "employment in the building trade" (insaatında istihdam), probably to assist in the rebuilding of the old town after the big Fatih fire of June 1918.⁶⁸ In August 1918 the shipping company asked women to apply to work as stewards in the women's cabins of the local steamers.⁶⁹

Thus, although the numbers are not comparable with the large numbers of women working in industries in Western Europe and later in the United States, the Ottoman female population was certainly called upon to meet the increasing need for labor of a country at war. The Ottoman leaders seem to have been well aware of the potential of the female labor pool. In June 1916 Enver Paşa, at that time the minister of war, took the initiative to found Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi, which not only worked as an employment agency introducing and allocating women and girls looking for work to potential employers but also opened workshops itself. Eventually this organization became one of the larger employers of women in the production of military textiles.

KADINLARI ÇALIŞTIRMA CEMIYET-I İSLAMIYESI

The main aim of Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi was "to protect women by finding them work and by making them accustomed to making a living in an honorable way." Although İktisadiyat Mecmuası (Journal of Economics) stated that the organization was intended for "all Muslim women" (bilumum İslam kadınları), the statutes do not warrant such a conclusion: they do not include any ethno-religious specifications."

Despite the patronage of the wife of Enver Paşa, Naciye Sultan, women were hardly involved in the administration of the organization. The (male) board members, however, seem to have made some efforts to include women. In 1917 a Hanımlar Heyeti (Ladies' Committee) headed by Naciye Sultan and consisting of twelve members was established. These twelve women were chosen from among all the female members of the organization. By 1920 the organization had 78 female members out of 435 regular members. Only four women remained on the Hanımlar Meclis-i İdaresi (Governing Board of Ladies) as it was called by then, including Naciye Sultan, whose husband Enver Paşa by that time had fled the country.⁷⁴ The lack of women involved in the organization and the administrative chaos created by its administrators led (an) anonymous author(s) in the women's periodical Kadınlar Dünyası (Women's World) to reprimand the organization and its administrators in 1921. Now that the male administrators had shown their incompetence, it was time to turn governance over to skillful and capable women, especially because this organization was established for women.⁷⁵ Disappointment was therefore great when the new Board of Directors again consisted only of men, mainly high bureaucrats and other men of the Istanbul Muslim establishment.⁷⁶

Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi not only worked as a mediator between women looking for work and employers looking for labor

but also employed women in enterprises owned and managed by the organization itself. According to *Osmanischer Lloyd* (Ottoman Lloyd), for example, the organization owned two of the factories mentioned above to which it allocated women: the Taksim Fanila ve Çorab Fabrikası, a factory equipped with machinery from Germany, and the Eyüp Melbusat İmalathanesi.⁷⁷ Moreover, it established textile workshops itself. In these workshops unskilled women were turned into skilled laborers, producing mainly military goods for the Ministry of War and the Müdafaa-i Milliye Cemiyeti (National Defense Organization).⁷⁸

Although the organization originally aimed at founding workshops with separate departments for the production of goods such as lace, simple white embroidery, dresses, machine-knitted socks and flannel undershirts, military uniforms, and tailor-made costumes,⁷⁹ the reports show that the production was almost exclusively geared toward wartime needs.⁸⁰

At the Çapa branch 20 women worked on 19 sewing machines, while 90 other women worked on 46 knitting machines. The women were using cotton from Adana and machines imported from Germany. The organization had ordered 100 sewing machines there, only 14 of which had been delivered by January 1918. In 1917–18 this branch produced 1,360 quilted blankets, 144,193 quilted vests, 37,000 sandbags, 6,164 girdles, 1,125 flannel undershirts, 6,910 woolen jackets, 25,675 underpants, 998 shirts, and 389 pairs of socks. The Fatih branch, which had 18 knitting machines for flannel shirts and 16 sewing machines at its disposal, produced more than 10,000 pair of socks, over 56,000 quilted vests, 7,800 woolen girdles, 5,340 jackets, 2,909 flannel undershirts, 698 items of headgear, and 855 children's clothes in that period. The Üsküdar branch possessed 40 sewing machines and 10 knitting machines on which women produced 31,843 quilted vests, 43,293 sandbags, 2,485 shirts, and 2,146 underpants.

These factories were mainly producing for the army, so the termination of the flow of orders from the army at the end of World War I was the main factor leading to the decrease in the labor force employed by the organization in 1919. ⁸⁶

The sources are unclear on the number of women employed by or through the organization. According to Yalman the organization employed between six thousand and seven thousand women in its workshops, while another seven thousand to eight thousand women were given work to do at home in times of "abundant work." Edhem Nejat mentioned in an article written in 1918 that the organization had em-

ployed and educated more than fifty-six thousand women. 88 Neither of these authors, however, gives the source for these numbers.

The need for work was enormous, as is clear from the number of women applying to the Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi after it was founded in the early summer of 1916. Immediately after the organization started activities on August 14 of that year it asked women in need to apply for a job through advertisements in the newspapers. The response was large: within nineteen days 11,000 women applied for a job. By the beginning of October this number had reportedly grown to 14,000. A month later the number of women applying for work had reached 15,000.

The board of the organization was aware that it would not be able to employ all these women. On November 7, 1916, Enver Paşa sent a request to the Ministry of Education to see whether it could employ any of these women. The ministry answered that it could only employ qualified teachers at girls' schools and forwarded the request to the existing schools.⁹³ Enver Pasa also sent a letter to the minister of the interior asking whether his ministry would be able to hire any women. 94 On November 13 the minister in turn sent a dispatch to the major of Istanbul, Bedri Bey, asking whether he could provide the women with work in hospitals or other institutions.95 It proved impossible to employ all the women who applied, so Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyeti decided to open soup kitchens to provide the women at least with some food. The number of women begging in the streets and in need of assistance was so large that the officers at a police station in Istanbul decided to found a similar organization later in 1916: İslam Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i Hayriyesi (Charitable Organization for the Employment of Muslim Women). This organization opened a workshop for boarders in Fındıklı. In a letter to the Ottoman Red Crescent the organization asked for beds and matresses to house the women properly.96

In the end Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi hired a limited group of applicants to work in one of its workshops who were chosen in a competition. How many women were actually employed by and through Enver Paşa's organization? The first annual report, which covers the period from Teşrinievvel 1332 until the end of Kanunuevvel 1333 (October/November 1916–January 1918), mentions that the organization employed a total of 24,254 daily workers over that period of fifteen months. This number did not include the 6,885 women placed in (semi) official and private companies and institutions during these months. According to a historical overview of the activities in the annual report

for 1920, the organization claimed to have had 2,000 Muslim women working daily to produce flannel undershirts, socks, quilted vests, and similar products for the army by February 1917. Osmanischer Lloyd reported in that particular month that 4,500 women had been given work by that time. 101

It is difficult, however, to establish the actual figures. The schedules given in the annual report of 1916–17 justify the conclusion that the number of 24,254 daily workers is highly exaggerated.

In that period the organization had three branches in various parts of Istanbul: Çapa, Fatih, and Üsküdar. The Çapa branch consisted of a workshop where 231 women were continuously employed and also had contracted 35 women producing slippers, plus another 405 women who were spinning and twining wool in their own homes. 102 Moreover, it had a dormitory and a dining hall for its all-female workforce. All the employees of this branch, from director to servant, were female. The director and the forewomen had graduated from Türk Kadınları Biçki Yurdu (Turkish Women's Tailor's Home) and were hired by the general manager of the Cemiyet, İsmail Hakkı, who was the husband of Behire Hakkı, the founder of Biçki Yurdu. 103 The director and the foreman of the Fatih branch were male. Under their supervision 128 women worked on a daily basis, while 250 women were working at home. The Üsküdar branch, which also had a male director, employed 60 women in its workshop and 200 women at home. 104 If we add up all these numbers, 419 women were employed on a daily basis in the workshops (excluding those working as executives or, for example, at the dining hall or dormitory of the Capa branch), while 890 women were working at home. The figures that the organization gives for the individual months between October 1916 and January 1918 vary, however, from a minimum of 72 in October/ November 1916 to a maximum of more than 5,000 in January/February 1917, as shown in table 16.1. 105

Hence the average number of workers for the organization according to this table is 1,617 per month. Excluding the two extremes, the average becomes 1,390, which is fairly close to the total of women working at a daily base in the workshops and as home workers. The 6,885 women employed elsewhere through the mediation of the organization plus the number of women working on a daily basis in the organization's workshops mentioned above total 7,304 women working on a daily basis. If we include the home workers this totals 8,194 women, which is only half of the number that Yalman gives and far below the 24,254 mistakenly mentioned in the report and taken for granted by, for example, Tülin Sümer. The reason for the confusion might be the way in which the

Table 16.1. Monthly Employment

Month	Number of Workers
October 1916	72
November 1916	578
December 1916	1,647
January 1917	5,113
February 1917	883
March 1917	2,212
April 1917	508
May 1917	1,113
June 1917	1,938
July 1917	1,664
August 1917	1,081
September 1917	2,179
October 1917	2,249
November 1917	1,398
December 1917	619
Total	23,254

Source: Devletlü İsmetlü Naciye Sultan Hazretlerinin Zir-i Himayelerinde Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi, 1333 Senesi Raporu, Cedvel No. 5.

Note: The table gives a total of 24,254. The actual total, however, is 23,254.

figure was calculated. First the number of employees per month was determined, then these numbers were totaled. This means that someone who had been employed for half a year was probably counted six times. Of course, the organization may have had a policy of replacing its complete labor force every month or the tables may only give the number of newly employed. Both possibilities, however, seem highly unlikely.

A further analysis of the figures in the annual report related to the payments made to the workers, moreover, indicates that even these figures might be too high: either not all women were working full-time or most women did not receive a proper wage. According to Yalman, the organization paid a minimum wage of 10 piasters (= kuruş) per day. This seems not unlikely given that the lowest wage for a working woman in the Women's Battalion was 250 kuruş per month. An advertisement to find workers for the Haydarpaşa hospital mentions a wage of 225 kuruş. If we use the annual report to calculate the average wages paid to the women, however, they vary between about 17 and 62 kuruş per month. The overall

average is 31.41 kuruş. This implies that many women were only employed part-time, hired on a daily contract and laid off as soon as the work was finished, or that the home workers were not paid on a daily basis but on the quantity produced. If we assume that the minimum wage is indeed 10 kuruş per day and that an average working month consisted of 22.5 days (but probably more), we can calculate how many full-time equivalents (fte) could be paid with the money that the organization spent on wages every month. The figures that result from this calculation show that the organization might have employed only a very limited number of women. The lowest fte would be 17.5, the highest 392.9. The average over the whole period of fifteen months, however, was only 225.7. This means that over the first fifteen months of its existence the organization itself provided paid full-time wages to an average of only 225.7 women.

In 1918, however, there seems to have been an increase: a total of 819,802 liras was paid as "workers' wages." This implies that the average fte for that year would have been 303.6. ¹⁰⁹ If we reverse the argument and take the number of women employed for granted with the salary as a variable, we would have to conclude that most women were paid much less than the minimum wage of 10 kuruş per day referred to by Yalman. This would mean that most women were probably working only for a meal and a bed.

To summarize, the figures given by the organization have to be used with caution. Although the organization did indeed find employment for many women, it seems to have been more an employment agency than an employer itself. Moreover, based on the total amount of money paid for wages, the workshops of the organization itself should be regarded as charity workshops rather than proper manufacturing enterprises working under regular market conditions.

WORLD WAR I, INDUSTRY, AND FEMALE EMANCIPATION

Thus the number of women in certain branches of the military industry increased during the war. Their employment, however, seems to have been limited and not to have run into the ten thousands. Still, it might be useful to ask where these women came from. Were these their first experiences as wage-earning women or not?

Based on the limited evidence available, this does not seem to be the case. While the beginning of the war meant an increase of work for women in some branches of industry, other branches experienced a sharp decline. These declines were further accelerated in the later years of the war when the available stocks of raw materials were running out and both import and export became increasingly difficult.

Although the textile industry was the sector in which most women found work, it was also the sector in which most women were laid off. The production of the more luxurious kinds of textile products in particular came almost completely to a halt due to the diminished demand. 111 Already during the first years of the war the labor force in the silk cloth industry was more than halved, while raw silk production lost almost one-third of its more than 3,500 workers. By the end of World War I this industry had almost completely disappeared. 112

Problems on the supply side caused a decrease in production in certain branches of the textile industry. While the producers of thread initially may have had a surplus due to the end of exports of both yarn and luxury products due to the war, in due course the purchase of raw materials or half products such as yarn became virtually impossible for nonmilitary producers of textiles. 113 First, the import from traditional suppliers such as Britain and India for finer cotton yarn and Britain and France for finer woolen yarn was cut off.¹¹⁴ By the end of 1916 imports from Germany and Austria-Hungary (the main supplier of the unbleached coarse calico called *Amerikan bezi*) also diminished, due to their own needs. 115 Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyeti suffered from the lack of half products. In December 1917 it sent a letter to the Ottoman Red Crescent stating that it could not produce the needed underwear for children due to the lack of appropriate cloth, which could no longer be imported. 116 The result of the lack of half products and raw materials was that the textile manufacturers in the Ottoman Empire had to rely on local production, which they tried to increase. As a consequence, however, the materials produced were coarser than they would have been with the imported yarn. 117

Second, the production of raw materials in the Ottoman Empire itself declined. Although few figures are known, Yalman reports, for example, that the production of tobacco fell from more than 55 million kilos in 1913 to just below 14 million in 1915, after which it slowly recovered to 21 million in 1918. The decline in cotton production was even more dramatic: from 24 million and 27 million kilos in 1913 and 1914 respectively to 3 million in 1915, 2 million in both 1916 and 1917, and 3 million again in 1918. Most of the wool production was directly confiscated by the military authorities to use for their own factories. This meant that all other producers within the textile sector, like the small textile workshops where mainly women were working, were left with no raw materials at all and had to lay off their personnel. It meant also, for example, that the estimated 60,000 persons working in the production of tapestry in Anatolia

(who were mostly women) were left without the necessary yarn and thus had to give up their work.¹¹⁹

Furthermore, as Healy and Darrow point out for Austria-Hungary and France, respectively, the employment of so many women in charity workshops for very low payment or just a meal might have had a detrimental effect on the labor market as such. In France the cheap labor of these workshops undercut the wages of the skilled women who had been working in textile industries: a large part of the army's demand, for example, could be met relatively cheaply by the charity work of the elite urban women and the women employed in the charity workshops. ¹²⁰ This may also have been the case in the Ottoman Empire, but it is difficult to determine based on the scanty materials available.

The effects of the decrease in tobacco production on the tobacco industry are unknown. Although the number of laborers increased in the first years of the war, it might have decreased again in the later years, depending on how much stock the factories had and how much of it was processed every year.

Although "thousands of women" might indeed have "found work in the military factories" during World War I, as Yalman says, 121 these women might not all have been the "ordinary women [drawn] into a working life" to whom Tekeli refers. 122 Women as a category were not drawn into a working life for the first time. What seems to have taken place is a shift both in the "market" in which women worked and in the geography of women's work: instead of producing luxury products for a civil market, women started to work for the military. With that shift female textile production was clustered in the workshops and factories in the more industrialized urban areas instead of being spread over the homes and workshops of Anatolia. It is unlikely that large numbers of women followed this shift in production and moved to the urban areas. But the producers of luxury civilian goods in the urban areas also lost their jobs. Employers might have preferred these more experienced women, who had worked before, to women who had never worked before. A small announcement in Tasvir-i Efkar (Picture of Ideas) seems to confirm this: Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi had, upon request, decided to bring eighty women (isçi kadın) from İzmir. 123

The employers, however, were not entirely depending on women. Some of the labor was done by men, who worked in these factories with the status of soldiers. They received the extremely low pay of soldiers and were more likely to be skilled, so the factory managers might even have preferred the men rather than the unskilled and higher-paid women.¹²⁴

In the military factory producing cotton thread and cloth in Makriköy, for example, 270 soldiers were employed by 1915. ¹²⁵ In a new factory founded in Adapazarı in 1916 with German assistance 400 "laborers were working as soldiers." ¹²⁶ It is not clear, though, whether these men were withdrawn from the fighting force only to be put to work in these factories, as was the case in Germany, or whether there were other reasons for not marching them off to the front. It is quite possible that they belonged to the so-called *silahsız ihtiyatiye*, non-Muslim conscripts who were not allowed to wear weapons and were made useful in this way.

Did war work close the gender gap in wages, improve the financial situation of women, or make them financially independent? None of these possibilities seems to be the case. Although the wages of women appear to have gone up a little more than those of men and the gap between the two narrowed somewhat in a few industries, no gender-specific figures are available for the two most important sectors: textiles and tobacco. It is clear, though, that the wages of women, like those of men, stayed far behind the inflation rate. Thus, even if women's pay increased, their real wages were decimated. While an income of 250 kuruş per month was sufficient to buy the necessary consumer goods for a family in July 1914, that family needed more than 4,500 kuruş for the same goods by September 1918. The minimum wage of approximately 250 kuruş offered by Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyeti as late as 1918, therefore, was by far not enough to keep a family fed and dressed properly.

Another element that could have changed the work situation of women was a shift in the division of labor. The data provide hardly any information on this subject. It seems that women did basically unskilled labor before the war. The book on state statistics lists no female officers (memur) or head workwomen (ustabaşı) but only female laborers (işçi). The sources do not indicate that a change took place in this regard, although perhaps the newly founded sewing workshops of the women's organizations and Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyeti may have used forewomen rather than foremen more than was usual.

Did any changes take place regarding the parameters of class, ethnic background, or status in the life cycle? In other words, did the composition of the totality of women working change in these aspects? This is again a question that is difficult to answer.

Daniel argues that in Germany class differences were partly eradicated and a new class of "war wives" was created. To what extent this was the case for the Ottoman Empire remains unclear. It seems that a class distinction continued between the women who needed to work and

those who had substantial family capital and thus did not need to go out for work. These more well-to-do women often became members of the charitable organizations that provided the poorer women with work. It is not clear what happened to the women of the middle class, which had started to develop in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, who were less affluent or lacked a social safety net. Some of them were able to find white-collar jobs vacated by men or non-Muslim women due to the war or the policy of nationalizing the economy, respectively. Others, who lacked any formal education, were forced to go to work in other kinds of jobs, including sweatshop work, like Irfan Orga's mother.

Before the war it seems that women who worked in a factory-like environment generally did so before they got married (up to the age of fifteen) and when they were older (after they were forty). After their marriage they would continue to work to contribute to the family income, but they worked at home. It seems that this pattern continued during the war. Many women with children whose husbands had been forced to leave them behind needed to find a source of income. Like the German women, they preferred a job that they could combine with their duties as a mother. Thus many women were given work to do at home. While Daniel qualifies this development in the German context as a step back into the nineteenth century because of the low payment and lack of labor protection, in the Ottoman context home work had been an ongoing feature until the war. What did take place was a shift in the products made. Instead of luxury products such as lace, embroidery, and tapestries, the female home workers now produced for the army.

Before the war an important part of the Ottoman female labor force seems to have consisted of non-Muslim women. Women's organizations such as Osmanlı Türk Kadınları Esirgeme Derneği (Organization for the Protection of Ottoman Turkish Women), Biçki Yurdu, and İstihlak-i Milli Kadınlar Cemiyeti (Women's Organization for National Consumption), however, concentrated their efforts on Muslim women. Is this also the case for Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi? Yavuz Selim Karakışla states in his conclusion that Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi only hired Muslim women and that only Muslim women were placed in the military industrial enterprises. But the publications of the organization itself do not easily justify such a conclusion. Only in hind-sight, in its report of 1920, does the organization specifically refer to the employment of 2,000 *Muslim* women in February 1917. The statistics in the first report of the organization lack ethno-religious specifics, as do the statutes and almost all of the advertisements of the organization in

the newspapers. 131 Nor do the words "Islamic Organization" in the name imply such a limitation. Zafer Toprak and Tiğinçe Özkiper Oktar in their Turkish texts and Karakışla in his translation all added the adjective "Ottoman" to the name, but none of the primary sources or official documents use this adjective. I would argue that the absence of this adjective in the name is utterly relevant, because it indicates the dismissal of the policy of Ottomanism by that time. 132 Similarly, the use of the term "Islamic" was relevant in the context of the shift to a nationalism that was Islamic at its heart. It is important to notice, however, that the adjective "Islamic" applies not to the supposed objects of the organization, the women, as Karakışla translated it, but to the organization as such. This seems to suggest that the official policy of the organization was notand perhaps could not be at that time—to aim only at Muslim women. Knowing of the conscious efforts of the government to nationalize (read Muslimize) the Ottoman economy, it is not unlikely, however, that this was covertly the case. Some of the sources certainly indicate this. 133 All in all, it seems that the industrial female labor force during World War I was increasingly more Muslim than it had been before. 134 The effect of this on the non-Muslim working women remains a topic for future research.

What did the Muslimization of work mean for Ottoman Muslim women? Did women's work during the war allow these women to enter the male domain and make them intermingle more freely with men? Again the answer is no. The authorities were only able to tap into the pool of Muslim female laborers by allowing them to maintain their physical distance from men. Many of the women, especially those with children, worked within the privacy of their homes, as noted. Those who worked in the workshops of the charitable women's organizations were in all-female environments, except for the occasional male foreman, which had been a general practice in the textile industry before the war too. Even in the army workshops women were kept secluded from men in single-sex departments. Little seems to have been changed by the war. Photographs show that the women generally fulfilled the requirements of *tesettür* (veiling according to Islam): they wore headscarves to cover their hair, as confirmed by other sources such as Lorenz. ¹³⁵

One other criterion used to judge the effects of the war is the postwar situation in comparison with the situation before and during the war. In this respect Ottoman women seem not to have gained anything either. With the end of the war the stream of orders from the Ministry of War dried up. Thus the men and women working at the weapons factory in Zeytinburnu and at the gunpowder factory at Makriköy were discharged.

Only those who used to work there before the war (men) were allowed to stay. The figures in the report of Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyeti in 1920 show that the post for the payment of laborers on the 1919 balance of payments was only enough to cover the wages of 131.7 fte, while in 1920 only 50–60 women were left working there. The aftereffects of the war followed by still another war, moreover, did not help the economy to recover. As a consequence working-class women not only lost their wartime jobs: the route to their traditional work continued to be barred.

With respect to the industrial sector the changes that took place due to World War I were minimal and do not show any evidence of an emancipating effect on the urban "ordinary women." On the contrary, it is more likely that the outcome of the war was negative for these women belonging to the lower strata of Ottoman urban society.

CONCLUSION

Analysis of the available data on Ottoman Muslim women during World War I does not warrant the simple conclusion drawn by Ahmed Emin Yalman that this war had had an emancipatory effect on women. 138 As in many of the other countries involved in the war, the situation was much more complicated. Women in the Late Ottoman Empire—as in any other country—did not form a homogeneous group. As other researchers on women in various countries have shown, the effects of World War I therefore were not uniform for all women. They varied, depending on their age and stage in their life-cycle, their ethno-religious roots, and their socioeconomic backgrounds. Two major trends can be discerned, though. First, the situation of war combined with the nationalization (read Muslimization) of the economy increased the number and share of Muslim women working in urban industrial settings as well as in manufacturing. A second change was that the shift from the production of luxury goods for an international civil market to the production of military goods for the local military led to a change in the geography of manufacturing: the production of textiles moved from the homes and workshops of Anatolia, where (luxury) consumer goods were produced, to the workshops and factories in the more industrialized urban areas, where mostly military goods were produced. Thus while Ottoman (Muslim) women in the urban areas were perhaps indeed gaining a new opportunity to earn a meager living in the industrial workforce, an important additional source of income for Ottoman (Muslim) women from the rural areas was lost.

NOTES

- 1. Ahmed Emin Yalman, Turkey in the World War, 235-38.
- Nermin Abadan-Unat, "Social Change and Turkish Women," 8–9, in Women in Turkish Society, edited by Nermin Abadan-Unat et al. (Leiden: Brill, 1982); Şirin Tekeli, Kadınlar ve Siyasal Toplumsal Hayat, 198–99.
- 3. Tekeli, Kadınlar ve Siyasal Toplumsal Hayat, 199.
- 4. See, for example, Maurine Weiner Greenwald, Women, War, and Work.
- 5. Ute Daniel, *The War from Within*, 37–127.
- 6. Laura Lee Downs, Manufacturing Inequality, 6-14, 24-30.
- 7. Ibid., 30-39. See also Irene Osgood Andrews and Margarett A. Hobbs, *Economic Effects of the World War upon Women and Children in Great Britain*, 50-74.
- 8. Greenwald, Women, War, and Work, 4.
- Karin Hausen, "The German Nation's Obligations to the Heroes' Widows of World War I."
- Maureen Healy, Vienna and the Fall of the Habsburg Empire, 175–81; Margaret H. Darrow, French Women and the First World War, 174–78.
- 11. "Introduction," in *Behind the Lines*, ed. Margaret Randolph Higonnet et al., 1–17.
- 12. Greenwald, Women, War, and Work; "Introduction," 8–10; Downs, Manufacturing Inequality, 186–211; Daniel, The War from Within.
- 13. The term "limiting legislation" is borrowed from Seth Koven and Sonya Michel, "Introduction: 'Mother Worlds," 18–19. They make a distinction between "redistributive" measures that compensate women for the loss of income or prevent them from having to give up their job and "limiting legislation," including measures that lead to a loss of work for women without any compensation, such as the limitation of working hours and protective measures related to working conditions.
- 14. "Introduction," 9; Andrews and Hobbs, *Economic Effects of the World War*, 126–66, 223; Daniel, *The War from Within*, 63–64.
- 15. Osmanlı Sanayii 1913–1915 İstatistikleri.
- 16. Roger Owen, "Anatolia and Istanbul, 1881–1914," 211.
- 17. When this "incorporation" started is a point of discussion. While İnalcık, Keyder, and Pamuk argue that it started in the 1830s with the Capitulations, Wallerstein and Kasaba argue that the actual start was earlier, in the second half of the eighteenth century. According to Gunder Frank, however, the Ottoman Empire (or the geographical area that it dominated) had always been part of a trading network stretching from the edges of Europe to the edges of Asia and also including Africa. In his view, the views proposed above are all distorted due to Eurocentrism, which leads these scholars to disregard any trading network in which the Europeans did not take part. Halil İnalcık, "When and How British Cotton Goods Invaded the Levant Markets"; Çağlar Keyder, State and Class in Turkey; Şevket Pamuk, The Ottoman Empire and European Capitalism, 1820–1913; Immanuel Wallerstein and Reşat Kasaba, "Incorporation into the World-Economy"; Andre Gunder Frank, ReORIENT.
- 18. The local production of both cotton and silk cloth were especially severely effected. Pamuk, *The Ottoman Empire and European Capitalism*, 18–21, 82–129.

- 19. M. Şehmuz Güzel, Kadın, Aşk ve İktidar, 38-42.
- 20. Donald Quataert, "The Age of Reforms: Manufacturing," 898–904.
- 21. Ibid.
- 22. Gülhan Balsoy, "Gendering Ottoman Labor History"; Donald Quataert, "Ottoman Women, Households, and Textile Manufacturing, 1800–1914." In a German article published in 1902 the author stated that almost all of the workers in the factories he referred to (among them the cotton mill in Yedikule, the fez factory in Fezhane, the shoe workshops in Beykoz, the porcelain factories, and the artillery factory in Tophane) were men and in most cases "Turks," except for the workers in the tapestry industry where women and children from surrounding villages were employed. [No author,] "Industrielle Unternehmungen in der Tuerkei." *Palästina*, no. 1 (1902): 13–15.
- 23. Yalman, Turkey in the World War, 91.
- 24. Veli Yılmaz, I'nci Dünya Harbi'nde Türk-Alman İttifakı ve Askeri Yardımlar, 99–100. See also İrfan Orga, Portrait of a Turkish Family, 72. He relates how his uncle (who belonged to one of the first contingents taking off for the front) did not have a uniform or marching boots but was marched off in his own clothes.
- 25. Yılmaz, I'nci Dünya Harbi'nde Türk-Alman İttifakı, 87, 101–4.
- 26. Ibid., 166, 310.
- 27. "I. Armeekorps," Osmanischer Lloyd, August 17, 1914, 2.
- 28. Charlotte Lorenz, Die Frauenfrage im Osmanischen Reiche, 54.
- 29. Osmanlı Sanayii 1913–1915 İstatistikleri, 135–39.
- 30. Orga, Portrait of a Turkish Family, 152, 156-57.
- 31. *Harb Mecmuasi* 1, no. 11 (Temmuz 1332 [July/August 1916]): 174.
- 32. Orga, Portrait of a Turkish Family, 164-67.
- Devletlü İsmetlü Naciye Sultan Hazretlerinin Zir-i Himayelerinde Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi 1333 Senesi Raporu, Cedvel No. 4.
- 34. Osmanlı Sanayii 1913–1915 İstatistikleri, 135–36.
- 35. These workshops seem to have served at the same time as correction facilities where "fallen women" were employed to prevent them from prostituting themselves. Yavuz Selim Karakışla, "Yoksulluktan fuhuş yapanların ıslahı (1910)." See also Nazan Maksudyan, "State 'Parenthood' and Vocational Orphanages (islâhhanes)." Fatma Âliye may have been referring to one of these workshops in her first novel when she mentioned a girl who had "money from military sewing" (asker dikişi parası) with whom the heroine of her novel, Fazıla, had taken refuge: Fatma Âliye Hanım, Muhâdarât, 263–65.
- 36. According to Kurnaz, who bases her information on the State Yearbooks, this workshop was connected to the Ministry of Trade. According to Ergin, who does not give his sources, it was connected to the Ministry of War, a not wholly unlikely option, as the women manufactured goods for the army. Şefika Kurnaz, Cumhuriyet Öncesinde Türk Kadını (1839–1923), 20–22; Osman Ergin, Türk Maarif Tarihi, 686–88.
- 37. Osmanlı Sanayii 1913–1915 İstatistikleri, 130, 135–39.
- 38. Ibid., 135-36.
- 39. Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi, 1333 Senesi Raporu, Cedvel No. 4.
- 40. Osmanlı Sanayii 1913–1915 İstatistikleri, 130.
- 41. Ibid., 131.

- 42. That is, if the Defterdar Mensucat Fabrikası is the same as the Feshane factory, which is very likely to be the case. *Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi, 1333 Senesi Raporu*, Cedvel No. 4.
- 43. Lorenz, Die Frauenfrage im Osmanischen Reiche, 61-62.
- 44. Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi, 1333 Senesi Raporu, Cedvel No. 4.
- 45. According to Lorenz, 400 women were employed at this factory by the organization. Ibid., 61–62.
- 46. "Çalışmak isteyen kadınlara," Tanin, 11 Haziran/June 1334/1918, 4.
- 47. Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi, 1333 Senesi Raporu, Cedvel No. 4.
- 48. "Alman gazetecilerin İstanbul ziyaretleri," *Tanin*, 25 Kanunuevvel/December 1333/1917, 3.
- 49. Osmanlı Sanayii 1913–1915 İstatistikleri, 101–4.
- 50. Ibid., 117.
- 51. Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi, 1333 Senesi Raporu, Cedvel No. 4.
- 52. Osmanlı Sanayii 1913–1915 İstatistikleri, 77.
- 53. Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi, 1333 Senesi Raporu, Cedvel No. 4.
- 54. Osmanlı Sanayii 1913–1915 İstatistikleri, 158–60.
- 55. Yılmaz, I'nci Dünya Harbi'nde Türk-Alman İttifakı, 310.
- 56. Harry Stuermer, Zwei Kriegsjahre in Konstantinopel.
- 57. Vedat Eldem, *Harp ve Mütareke Yıllarında Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Ekonomisi*, 81. The 1915/16 budget for the İmalat-1 Harbiye refers to 4,500 employees (*memur*), foreseeing a total payment to them of 12 million kuruş. This means that the daily wage for these employees was approximately 10 kuruş. Ibid., 97–98.
- 58. See, for example, the advertisement specifically listing the call of duty for skilled artisans and the order to report to their recruitment offices in order to be employed at "certain institutions and certain factories in the capital": "Les artisans," *Lloyd Ottoman*, February 2, 1915, 4.
- 59. Lewis Einstein, *Inside Constantinople*, 274-75.
- "İmalat-i Harbiye Müdüriyeti'nden," Tasvir-i Efkar, 15 Ağustos 1331 (August 28, 1915), 4.
- 61. "Frauen als Fabrikarbeiterinnen," Korrespondenzblatt der Nachrichtenstelle für den Orient 2, no. 14 (January 1915): 340; Lorenz, Die Frauenfrage im Osmanischen Reiche, 62.
- 62. "Kadın işçi aranıyor," Tanin, 29 Temmuz/July 1918, 4.
- 63. Yılmaz, I'nci Dünya Harbi'nde Türk-Alman İttifakı.
- 64. "Frauen im Zivildienst," Der Neue Orient 1, no. 7 (July 1917): 331.
- 65. Yalman, *Turkey in the World War*, 237; "Kadınlarımızdan da amele," *Sanayi* 11, no. 31 (Mart/March 1333/1917), 32, as quoted in Zafer Toprak, *İttihad-Terakki ve Cihan Harbi*, 231*n*38.
- 66. "Die Tätigkeit der Frau," Osmanischer Lloyd, April 19, 1917, 3; Lorenz, Die Frauenfrage im Osmanischen Reiche, 69.
- 67. "İzmir'de kadın tanzifat amelesi," *Tasvir-i Efkar*, 24 Nisan/April 24, 1333/1917, 2; "İzmir'de kadın tanzifat amelesi," *İktisadiyat Mecmuası* 55 (10 Mayıs 1333 [May 10, 1917]): 7.
- 68. The women would receive 10–15 kuruş per day plus one *okka* of bread. "İnşaat için hanım aranıyor," *Tanin*, 6 Ağustos/August 6, 1334/1918, 4.
- 69. "Kadın kamarot isteniyor," Vakit, 22 Ağustos/August 22, 1918, 2.

- 70. In June 1916 the organization applied for permission to be officially established at the Ministry of Interior. After the approval of the authorities, it was officially set up on August 14, 1916. Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi, *Nizamname*, 1.
- 71. It would be December 1916 before the Germans established a Nationaler Ausschuss für Frauenarbeit im Kriege and the Austrian-Hungarian military authorities decided to found a Women's Auxiliary Labor Force in the Field (weibliche Hilfskräfte der Armee im Felde). The French never mobilized their women in an official context despite the establishment of a Comité du Travail Féminin to study the possibilities to do so in April 1916. Daniel, The War from Within, 77; Healy, Vienna and the Fall of the Habsburg Empire, 204–9; Darrow, French Women and the First World War, 187–188.
- 72. Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi, Nizamname, 2.
- 73. "Matbuat: Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi," İktisadiyat Mecmuası 23 (28 Temmuz 1332 [August 10, 1916]): 7.
- 74. Yavuz Selim Karakışla, Women, War and Work in the Ottoman Empire, 67-68.
- 75. "Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi," *Kadınlar Dünyası* 194 (1 Kanunusanı/ January 1, 1921): 11.
- 76. "Havadis-i dünya: Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyeti yine erkeklerin elinde," *Kadınlar Dünyası* 194, no. 6 (5 Şubat/February 5, 1921): 14.
- 77. "Frauenarbeit," *Osmanischer Lloyd*, February 9, 1917, 3. The ownership of these factories, however, is not confirmed in other sources.
- Ahmed Emin, "Kadınları Çalıştırma Teşebbüsü," Vakit, 8 Şubat/February 8, 1334/1918, 1.
- 79. "Matbuat: Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi," İktisadiyat Mecmuası 23 (28 Temmuz 1332 [August 10, 1916]): 7.
- See also the advertisement in which the organization explicitly asks for women
 to assist in the sewing of military equipment. "Dikiş ve iş isteyen muhadderata,"
 Tasvir-i Efkar, 16 Teşrinievvel 1332 (October 29, 1916), 2.
- 81. Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi, 1333 Senesi Raporu, 4–5.
- 82. "Activité féminine," *Lloyd Ottoman*, January 25, 1918, 3; see also Lorenz, *Die Frauenfrage im Osmanischen Reiche*, 61–62.
- 83. Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi, 1333 Senesi Raporu, Cedvel No. 1.
- 84. Ibid., Cedvel No. 2.
- 85. Ibid., Cedvel No. 3.
- 86. Devletlü İsmetlü Naciye Sultan Hazretlerinin Zir-i Himayelerinde Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi 1336 Senesi Raporu.
- 87. Yalman, Turkey in the World War, 259.
- 88. Edhem Nejat, "Türkiye'de kız mektepleri ve terbiyesi," *Türk Kadını* 11 (17 Teşrinievvel 1334 [October 30, 1918]): 163–65.
- "Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi idare-i umumiyesinden," *Tasvir-i Efkar*,
 Ağustos 1332 (August 15 1916), 2.
- 90. "Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi hakkında," *Tasvir-i Efkar*, 25 Ağustos 1332 (September 7, 1916), 2; "İktisadi haberler: Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi hakkında," *İktisadiyat Mecmuası* 27 (1 Eylül 1332 [September 14, 1916]): 7.
- 91. Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi, 1333 Senesi Raporu, 4; Ahmed Emin, "Kadınları Çalıştırma Teşebbüsü," Vakit, 8 Şubat/February 1334/1918, 1.

- 92. Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi/Prime Ministry Ottoman Archive in Istanbul (hereafter BOA), DH.KMS, 42/10, 17 Muharrem 1335. It is unclear how many inhabitants Istanbul had at that particular moment and thus how to interpret this figure. In 1914 Istanbul supposedly had approximately 975,000 inhabitants. Approximately 600,000 of them were Muslim. Using slightly different numbers but stating that half of these 600,000 were women and that half of the women were of working age (fifteen to forty-five years old), Karakışla reaches the conclusion that approximately 10 percent of all Muslim women who were employable and 5 percent of all Muslim women living in Istanbul had applied to the organization. This argument may not be tenable for several reasons. First, especially during times of war the population of a city is in flux and male-female rates change rapidly. It is therefore risky simply to transpose the 1914 figures to 1916. Second, Karakışla presumes that all the applicants were Muslims, but the sources do not give any indication of the ethno-religious background of the applicants. Third, he refers to women aged fifteen to forty-five as women of working age, ignoring the fact that those women generally preferred not to work outside their homes due to their familial duties. The women working outside their homes were in general young girls under fifteen and women over forty. But the means of communication were less developed and the majority of the female inhabitants of the city probably were hardly able to read or write. The information was thus very likely spread by word of mouth, so these figures can be regarded as one indication of the desperate situation of women living in Istanbul during the war. Karakışla, Women, War and Work in the Ottoman Empire, 169-70; Alan Duben and Cem Behar, Istanbul Households, 193; Cem Behar, ed., Osmanlı imparatorluğu'nun ve Türkiye'nin Nüfusu, 1500–1927, 73-74, 78.
- 93. BOA, Maarif Nezareti, Mektubi Kalemi (hereafter MF.MKT), 1220/74, 22M1335.
- 94. BOA, DH.KMS, 42/10, 17M1335.
- 95. BOA, DH.KMS, 42/10, 17M1335.
- 96. Türk Kızılayı Arşivi/Turkish Red Crescent Archives, Ankara (hereafter TKA), 74/80, 4 Kanunuevvel 1332 (December 17, 1916). A slightly different name, "İslam Kadınlar [sic] Çalıştırma Cemiyeti," was used in the list with women's organizations in the Osmanlı Hilal-i Ahmer Cemiyeti Hanımlar Heyet-i Merkeziyesi, Takvim, 199. Interestingly enough, Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi is lacking on this list. It remains unclear whether these sources are referring to one and the same organization. The 1336 report cited by Oktar refers to a branch of Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi located in Kabataş (a neighborhood adjacent to Fındıklı). It is possible that the police officers started their organization independently but that it was absorbed by the organization of Enver Paşa to become its Kabataş branch. Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi, 1336 Senesi Raporu, 23, 24, 26, as quoted in Tiğinçe Özkiper Oktar, Osmanlı Toplumunda Kadının Çalışma Yaşamı, 117–18, 126.
- 97. "Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi idare-i umumiyesi'nden," *Tasvir-i Efkar*, 11 Teşrinisani 1332 (November 24, 1916), 2.
- 98. Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi, 1333 Senesi Raporu, 5.
- 99. Ibid., Cedvel No. 4.
- 100. Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi, 1336 Senesi Raporu.

- 101. "Frauenarbeit," Osmanischer Lloyd, February 9, 1917, 3.
- 102. See, for example, "İş arayan hanımlara," *Tasvir-i Efkar*, 25 Teşrinisani 1332 (December 8, 1916), 2; and "İş arayan hanımlara," *Tanin*, 16 Teşrinisani/November 1333/1917, 3, through which the organization looked for women who could process (scour, card, and spin) wool and knit it into socks at home.
- 103. "Matbuat: Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi," İktisadiyat Mecmuası 23 (28 Temmuz 1332 [August 10, 1916]): 7.
- 104. Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi, 1333 Senesi Raporu, Cedvel Nos. 1–3.
- 105. Ibid., Cedvel No. 5.
- 106. Tülin Sümer, "Türkiye'de İlk Defa Kurulan Kadınları Çalıştırma Derneği."
- 107. Yalman, Turkey in the World War, 259.
- 108. "Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi'nden," Vakit, 16 Temmuz/July 16, 1334/1918, 2.
- 109. Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi, 1336 Senesi Raporu.
- 110. For example, the relatively small sweets production and canning industry. *Osmanlı Sanayii 1913–1915 İstatistikleri*, 63–64, 68–70.
- 111. According to a report of the U.S. consul in Constantinople published in 1915, "[p]roducers [had] large quantities of thread on hand which they [were] unable to export." G. B. Ravndal, "Turkey," 16.
- 112. Eldem, Harp ve Mütareke Yıllarında Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Ekonomisi, 172; Osmanlı Sanayii 1913–1915 İstatistikleri, 142–50. See also "Türkische Seidenwirtschaft im Kriege," Die Neue Türkei 1, no. 19 (June 1917): 4–6.
- 113. See also Healy, Vienna and the Fall of the Habsburg Empire, 176n47.
- 114. Osmanlı Sanayii 1913–1915 İstatistikleri, 134, 138–39.
- 115. Daniel, The War from Within, 58-62.
- 116. TKA, 345/79, 15 Kanunuevvel 1333 (December 28, 1917).
- 117. Orga's father, for example, complains about the coarse cloth used for his military underwear. Orga, *Portrait of a Turkish Family*, 79.
- 118. Yalman, *Turkey in the World War*, 117–18. The data that Eldem gives for the cotton production in Adana indicate an even more disastrous situation: from 120,000 bales of cotton in 1913 to 135,000 bales in 1914, with a fall to only 15,000 bales in 1915. For the years 1916 to 1918 he does not give any figures at all. Vedat Eldem, "Cihan Harbi'nin ve İstiklal Savaşı'nın Ekonomik Sorunları," 378.
- 119. Eldem, Harp ve Mütareke Yıllarında Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Ekonomisi, 80–81. İn 1915 the U.S. consulate in İzmir reported: "Carpet making, however, which furnished employment to thousands of hands, has been almost entirely suspended on account of lack of wool and money.... The wool collected for the carpets has been largely requisitioned." George Horton, "Turkey: Smyrna," 2. According to the report the cotton and wool mills were also producing far below their normal level due to lack of raw material, coal, and money.
- 120. Healy, Vienna and the Fall of the Habsburg Empire, 175–81; Darrow, French Women and the First World War, 174–78.
- 121. Ahmed Emin Yalman, Yakın Tarihte Gördüklerim ve Geçirdiklerim, 1:336.
- 122. Şirin Tekeli, *Kadınlar ve Siyasal Toplumsal Hayat*, 198–99 (quotation).
- 123. "İşçi Kadınlar," Tasvir-i Efkar, 2 Mayıs/May 1333/1917, 2.
- 124. Zafer Toprak, İttihat-Terakki ve Devletçilik, 155.

- 125. Osmanlı Sanayii 1913–1915 İstatistikleri, 130.
- 126. *Harb Mecmuası* 1, no. 14 (Teşrinisani 1332 [November/December 1916]): 212. See also Zafer Toprak, *Türkiye'de "Milli İktisat,*" 202–5.
- 127. Toprak, İttihat-Terakki ve Devletçilik, 149.
- 128. See, for example, the photographs discussed in the article by Balsoy, "Gendering Ottoman Labor History," 45–68. Although she does not refer to ethnicity at all, the women in these photographs taken in or just after 1900 all seem to be non-Muslim, as they wear no scarfs or other specifically "Muslim" gear. Kabadayı points out that the female employees were almost all non-Muslim, although the male workers in 1876 were in the majority Muslim: Mustafa Erdem Kabadayı, "Working in a Fez Factory in Istanbul in the Late Nineteenth Century."
- 129. Karakışla, Women, War and Work in the Ottoman Empire, 172-73.
- 130. Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi, 1336 Senesi Raporu.
- 131. An exception seems to be the very first advertisement of the organization, which explicitly referred to "Muslim ladies" (*İslam hanımları*). "Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi İdare-i Umumiyesinden," *Tasvir-i Efkar*, 2 Ağustos 1332 (August 15, 1916), 2.
- 132. Karakışla used the adjective in his translation of the name: "Society for the Employment of Ottoman Muslim Women." Karakışla, Women, War and Work in the Ottoman Empire; Oktar, Osmanlı Toplumunda Kadının Çalışma Yaşamı; Tiğinçe Özkiper Oktar, "Osmanlı Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslâmiyesi, 1920 senesi raporu"; Zafer Toprak, "Osmanlı Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyeti."
- 133. Notably, in a letter of the founding members to prominent members of Ottoman society cited by Karakışla the authors refer to *Türk ve İslam kadınlığı* (Turkish and Muslim womanhood), while the director of the organization, İsmail Hakkı, in a letter to the minister of interior cited by Oktar, refers to *muhadderat-ı islamiye* (virtous Muslim women) and *İslam hanımları* (Muslim ladies). BOA, Ali Fuat Türkgeldi'den Satın Alınan Evrakları, 6/27, cited in Karakışla, *Women, War and Work in the Ottoman Empire*, 54n51. BOA, DH.KMS, 42/10, 27 Teşrinievvel 1332, cited in Oktar, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Kadının Çalışma Yaşamı*, 104–5.
- 134. For the advertisement of a (Muslim) factory owner also explicitly asking for İslam hanımları, see "İslam Hanımlarına İş," Tasvir-i Efkar, 20 Eylül 1332 (October 3, 1916), 2.
- 135. As opposed to the supposedly non-Muslim women in the photographs in Balsoy's article. Balsoy, "Gendering Ottoman Labor History."
- "İmalat-1 Harbiye Kuyudat-1 Zatiye Kaleminden," Vakit, 27 Teşrinisani/November 1918, 2.
- 137. Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyet-i İslamiyesi, 1336 senesi raporu. See also Sabiha Zekeriya, "Kadınlara Çalışma Hakkı," Büyük Mecmua 11 (18 Eylül/September 1919): 170, as quoted in Karakışla, Women, War and Work in the Ottoman Empire, 176.
- 138. Yalman, *Turkey in the World War*, 235–38.

Trading in the Shadow of Wars in a Doomed Empire

Aliye F. Mataracı

It was never the people.

— Sano Halo

The seven months covered by the commercial correspondence of a late Ottoman Muslim trading house between the end of March and the end of November 1914 overlapped with the interwar period between the Balkan Wars and World War I. The letters depict some of the dramatic instances of the period: the financial hardships accompanying the Balkan Wars, the leaping of the boycott movement to the eastern Black Sea and the consequent forced departure of Greek traders, the awakening of Muslim-Turkish subjects to the early propositions of a "national economy," the commercial closures and openings caused by the beginning of the war. The trading house was spread over three cities: the center of the European cotton market, the capital of the Ottoman Empire, and the provincial hometown of the brothers in the eastern Black Sea. This allows us to follow the direct impact of the Balkan Wars and the beginning of World War I through the prism of various commercial and political centers.

The interwar period between the Balkan Wars and World War I is mostly integrated into the history of World War I and hence considered to be a transition period between wars in Turkish historiography. Such an anachronistic positioning creates the illusion that World War I was to happen anyhow and the Ottoman Empire was destined to enter it. In Turkish historiography the Balkan Wars signal the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. The loss of the remaining Balkan territories is equated with the loss of the economic power and social capital of the empire.

Viewed as a rehearsal or prelude of World War I for Turks,² the Balkan Wars are also considered to be the end of the ideology of Ottomanism. In the aftermath of the Balkan Wars, the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) started promoting the rising ideology of Turkish nationalism instead. The CUP leadership, inspired by European nationalism and bourgeois liberal experiences, intended to take the necessary steps for the creation of a national Turkish bourgeoisie. All these intentions, packaged within the "national economy" movement, put forward two major political and economic agendas: encouraging Muslim-Turkish subjects to engage in business and boycotting the businesses of non-Muslim subjects.

This narrative displays a smooth and "naturalized" historical flow from the Balkan Wars into World War I, which was to continue with the War of Independence. This results in a jump in Turkish historiography regarding the interwar period between the Balkan Wars and World War I. As a result this period usually gets historicized and analyzed within the context of World War I and hence is misrepresented as dominated by the policies and ideologies of the war period yet to follow. In this regard it is usually misrepresented as lacking a genuine character of its own. The current collection of documents, with its discourse and the evidence it provides at a grassroots level, not only contributes to the history of the period but also puts forward some insights to challenge the available Turkish historiography.

SNAPSHOT OF THE OTTOMAN MUSLIM TRADING HOUSE IN 1914

The Ottoman Muslim trading house under scrutiny evolved around three Muslim brothers, the Mataracızâdes, who worked as transregional import and export commission agents at the end of the empire. The eldest of the three brothers, Ali Mataracızâde (1883/84–1941), was based in Rize, while the middle brother, İlyas Mataracızâde (1889/90–1921), worked in Istanbul. Their youngest sibling, Cemil Mataracızâde (1895/96–1917), was barely eighteen when he was sent to Manchester. Through him the brothers started importing textiles from Manchester to Istanbul and Sevastopol. They were also purchasing merchandise from businesses in Istanbul and selling it to traders in the provinces of the empire. They mostly traded in manufactured goods from center to periphery as well as in food and raw materials from periphery to center. Moreover, in addition to their already established trade business, they had the ambition to launch

new lines of business like warehousing and shipping. They even explored opportunities of exporting hazelnuts to the United States or importing gas and sugar from Romania after the beginning of World War I.

COMMERCIAL CORRESPONDENCE UNDER SCRUTINY

This work is based mainly on the information provided by the correspondence of the Mataracizâde trading house, which covers a period of approximately seven months of the year 1914, starting on March 28 and ending on November 25, almost a month after the Ottoman Empire entered World War I. This collection consists of 355 folios, including 312 commercial letters, 32 invoices, and 7 pages of debt records. All the correspondence is about their business, consisting mostly of letters exchanged among the brothers, with scarcely any content related to family or private issues. The rest of the correspondence consists of letters written to merchants in various areas of the Ottoman Empire and Russia. These constitute what remains of the firm's 1914 copybook, containing the copies of letters and invoices sent to their partners and collaborators. It represented one of the three different types of registers that merchants had to keep according to the Commercial Law of 1850.³

COVERING THE SHADOW OF WARS: TURKISH HISTORIOGRAPHY

Turkish historiography of the period covered by the documents under consideration is generally written on the basis of the dominant political developments and ideologies of the era. This is mainly because of the nature of the sources available for writing history in Turkey. Archival documents, works of literature, and press items all reflect the vision of the political elite of the period, as these sources were to a large extent produced firsthand by the elite or their entourage. Although our knowledge of the intricacies of the political knowledge of the time and its production and distribution is quite rich thanks to the available literature in political history, we are still very ignorant regarding the reception of these ideas at a grassroots level. This ignorance is related to the availability of historical sources: the abundance of primary or secondary sources produced by the political elite of the time is not paralleled by anything comparable at a more popular level.

The silence at a grassroots level, in addition to leaving too much space for the political discourse as it appears in the literature, causes certain other problems. First, it creates the impression that the popular discourse was as political and hence as nationalist as the dominant elite discourse. This in turn leads to the expectation that people in the street should have been as politicized and as nationalist as the elite members. All this ends up creating the illusion that discourse and reality were one and the same. The absence of popular voices also works against the role of human agency. Ottoman Muslims seem to suffer more from this, due to their low level of literacy in comparison to their Armenian or Greek counterparts, which leads to a consequent lower level of representation in the existing literature. Another issue disregarded by the current literature is the pace at which news could travel at the time. The problems related to communication during the period are underestimated. Hence the assumption that the nationalist discourse produced and spread by the center reached each and every point of the empire immediately, simultaneously, and evenly and was forthwith assimilated by the Muslim subjects dominates the current literature on the period.

THE AFTERMATH OF THE BALKAN WARS

The decade of war ending with the collapse of the Ottoman Empire began with the Balkan Wars of 1912–13 and continued with World War I (1914–18) and the War of Independence (1920–22). Each of these conflicts was accompanied by severe and long-lasting demographic, social, and economic consequences with a cumulative effect over time. This section focuses on the hardships accompanying the Balkan Wars as they recur repetitively in the commercial correspondence under scrutiny. The loss of the economic power and social capital of the Ottoman Empire, associated with the Balkan Wars in the current Turkish historiography, is expressed in the available commercial correspondence as "the hardships of the harm that occurred during the war times [Balkan Wars]" (muharebe zamanları [Balkan Harbi] olan fenalıkların sıkıntıları). The correspondence offers no explanation of the "harm," despite the constant underlining of its consequent financial hardships. The social and political aspects of these hardships were also left in silence.

The hardships accompanying the Balkan Wars, most specifically the shortage of money created by wartime conditions, were frequently mentioned in the letters. The period was specifically defined by the "scarcity of the times" (*zaman kesadlığı*). The available correspondence constantly refers to the shortage and even lack of money, followed by reference to the urgent need to collect the debts owed to the brothers:

I hope you have already sent me some more money. The hardships of the harm that occurred during the war times [Balkan Wars] are being felt now. I request that you immediately send me a lot of money. Indeed, because of the shortage of money, I have a great need for it. May you remain in good health. And let me know your order. (II Nisan 1330/April 24, 1914)

Brother, regarding the money issue, I have waited for you till today but only I know what I have been through. Especially nowadays, there is an extreme shortage of money. We feel the hardships of the war times [Balkan Wars] now. To sum up, we are very short of money. I beg you, upon the arrival of my letter, immediately send a lot of money from both Hüseyin Efendi and yourself. I ask you to send more than what you owe. (14 Nisan 1330/April 27, 1914)

Both of these quotations underline the aftereffects of the Balkan Wars: the period was described as one in which the atrocities and hardships of the conflict started to appear within the world of trade. While the emphasis on the hardships of the aftermath of the Balkan Wars recurs throughout the correspondence until the beginning of World War I, the ending of the first quotation above with a request for the details of a new order emphasizes the will to continue with business despite everything. Letters of self-introduction exploring future business possibilities with new partners (preferably Muslims), analyzed below, also point toward efforts serving such a cause. Nevertheless, some deliberate decisions had to be made for the continuation of business within the political and economic agenda of the empire in 1914. Mataracızâde Brothers complied with this agenda (summarized under the title "national economy" in the current literature) in their own terms to a certain extent just like the other subjects of the empire, regardless of ethno-religious divides. The inevitability of the decision to comply and the actual presence of a national economy are discussed in the conclusion below.

The available collection of correspondence provides certain examples described as contributing to the financial hardships of the times, which should also be considered to be their consequences. Nevertheless, the brothers preferred to exploit them as contributing to their own hardships or, in other words, as excuses for collecting debts. Some of these instances followed from the inner dynamics of the network, whereas others were the consequence of a broader context, such as the dominant economic and political policies of the period. As an example of the latter,

the outbreak of war between Austria-Hungary and Serbia after the assassination of Habsburg heir apparent Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo on June 28, 1914, immediately translated into İlyas's commercial world as a new excuse to be exploited in the collection of debts and also as a factor contributing to the already existent financial hardships of the times. In his comminatory and vituperative letters to his various commercial partners in the provinces, he referred to the war first as "this Austria war issue" (bu Avusturya harb meselesi) and then as "that Australia [sic] war combat" (şu Avustralya harb muharebesi) as of the third day after its outbreak. His confusion was settled in the following days. The war eventually acquired a central position around which the rest had to evolve and remained so until the last letter, dated November 25, 1914 (12 Teşrin-i Sani 1330).

While he followed what was happening in the world, İlyas's focus was still on commercial matters, which can also be an indicator of his familiarity with war situations. This does not come as a surprise, given the Italian-Turkish War and Balkan Wars. I assume such a familiarity to be valid in relative terms for each Ottoman subject of the period. In his letters to his commercial partners in the provinces İlyas constantly highlighted his financially underprivileged position due to his presence in the center, Istanbul. Trying to explain the financial pressure that war added to the already existent hardships of the times, he was also touching upon the significant differences between commercial practices in the center and in the provinces:

As you know, now also came up that Australia [sic] war combat. As you know, in such times, immense stagnation happens, and it affects Istanbul the most. Our hardship would have been more than enough, but now this happens. There is no need to describe the hardships of money anymore. If you were here, you would see and understand much better, my brother. I am in deep need of money. I beg you, urgently, much money. (18 Temmuz 1330/July 31, 1914)

You also write that there is no tolerance with me. Rest assured, I always wish for tolerance for you. However, the times do not tolerate. Brother, they hardly permit us twenty-four hours here. Do not think of yourself only. Think about my situation once. Now that the Austria wars started, do not even ask. It is not possible to describe the stagnancy of money by writing about it. As you know, such things affect Istanbul the most. I beg of you, you look

after me these days, my highly esteemed one. It is required that you send me more than your debts these days. (19 Temmuz 330/August 1, 1914)

We may wonder whether the immediate actual impact of the outbreak of the war on the capital market was as harsh as İlyas claims in the quotations above. It is also possible that he might have been projecting his general expectations for the outbreak of a war based on his previous commercial experience in Istanbul during the Balkan Wars. Nevertheless, his narration of his observations during his daily routine, which passed through important commercial and financial centers of Istanbul like Eminönü and Banks Street (Bankalar Caddesi), testified to his reiteration of increasing stagnation and shortage of cash in Istanbul.

İlyas's observations of the market were mostly related to the immediate impact of the outbreak of World War I on the financial situation, especially the banks in the capital. He first witnessed the immediate reaction of the clients of the Wiener Bankverein (Viennese Union of Banks), which was an Austrian Bank, to the outbreak of the Austrian-Serbian war: a rush to withdraw their money from their accounts. This was followed by the declaration of a moratorium for a period of one month on August 3, 1914, a day after the signing of the German-Ottoman alliance and Germany's declaration of war on Russia. As the moratorium included all debts and contracts, including deposit accounts, 8 it had an immediate impact on the dealings of banks with their clients. İlyas summarized the financial situation in the capital in a sentence: "Because of the current affairs there is horrendous stagnancy in Istanbul today. The banks, etc., are not paying any money."9 Due to the moratorium, banks had decreased the amount of their daily payments regardless of the amounts deposited. As narrated by İlyas, the Ottoman Bank started paying twenty liras per day per account. Based on his immediate witnessing of the situation of the market in Istanbul, İlyas felt the urge to inform both his brothers, but in differing tones and details. He wrote to his elder brother, Ali, in Rize: "Wars are also going very bad. Let's see what will happen. Let's hope for the best. Nowadays everywhere is tight, in hardship and in worry. Much attention is necessary to collect money, my brother" (19 Temmuz 1330/ August 1, 1914).

In a following letter written on the same day, August 1, İlyas informed his younger brother, Cemil in Manchester, in a less dramatic tone: "Of course, you are informed about the world affairs, you read the papers. Newspapers there write more explicitly and clearly. Due to such turmoil

of the current affairs, the markets are very irregular and complicated as well" (19 Temmuz 1330/August 1, 1914).

İlyas's immediate advice to Ali in Rize was to hoard money, meanwhile paying debts: "In line with this turmoil, it is necessary to stash money and also to pay debts. It is much more necessary to stash, my brother." The declaration of a moratorium resolved his hesitancy regarding payments of debts. His focus remained on the collection of money due rather than on the payment of debts. At the outbreak of the war, due to the political and economic ambiguities regarding the immediate future, İlyas ended up suggesting the same survival strategy previously adopted by his Greek debtors after the coup d'état organized by the Young Turks: to interrupt payments and try to collect and stash as much cash as possible. He particularly warned his brothers not to accept any other kind of payment than cash due to the general problems with banks with respect to payments.

İlyas was particularly concerned that Cemil might fall short of money in Manchester. Receiving a telegram from Cemil that explained his dire need for cash, İlyas immediately warned him to be cautious about his money and not to pay any debts whatsoever, no matter how pressed he might be. Trying to bring the possible impact of the current war situation on their near future to his younger brother's attention, especially possible problems that might be faced in sending him money, İlyas jotted down all possible disaster scenarios to convince his brother of the importance of collecting and keeping as much money as possible, particularly in his situation:

It seems that you do not have any pocket money left. Be cautious, if there may be money coming in, in no way should you use it to pay debts. Be relaxed. Whether it's Alyanak or other [merchants], they may try to claim money, they may pressure you, as they are impudent and also because you are inexperienced, shy. You tell them in a relaxed manner that there is a moratorium in Turkey, they do not give or send me any money. In no way should you feel embarrassed. Tell them, what can we do? This is the way the world is and so I am. Be relaxed, do not feel pressured, my brother....

This is the war and the world. One never knows, postal services may not function, money may not be transferred. Banks also may not accept it and hence it may be impossible to send money. It may be impossible to send money as it may be impossible to find it. It may be possible to find money but impossible to send it.

Therefore everything is based on hope and possibility in this time. If possible, try to draw one or two liras from one or the other my brother. (5 Ağustos 1330/August 18, 1914)

The incident of İsmail Reiszâde Zühdi Bey's check provides a good illustration of the difficulty of money transfers around the time of the outbreak of the war, which would become almost impossible later. It also illustrates the flow of money among three main branches of the Ottoman cotton market: the provinces, Istanbul, and Manchester. İsmail Reiszâde Zühdi Efendi, who was a local notable merchant in Ünye, sent Cemil a check for 128 Ottoman liras in return for the textiles that he had forwarded to him. The check was to be cashed by Asayasi and Company in Istanbul. Cemil sent the check to İlyas, attached to his letter dated July 25 (three days before the outbreak of the war), so that he would cash it and send back the amount in English pounds. İlyas, receiving the check exactly within a week on August 1 (three days after the outbreak of the war in Europe), immediately contacted the owners of the check, who claimed that they had not heard anything from İsmail Reiszâde Zühdi Efendi regarding the payment. İlyas, being unable to cash the check with Asayasi and Company or with the Deutsche-Orient Bank in a later attempt, sent İsmail Reiszâde Zühdi Efendi consequent telegrams and letters to convince him to cancel the check and instead forward the amount due as cash, in a bundle by mail, which did not happen until at least the end of the period covered by the correspondence (the end of November).

The problems faced with banks in payments in general after the declaration of a moratorium forced the exploitation of an alternative means of money transfer, which was considered to be more reliable in its operations than the banks: the postal system. Replacing banks, the post office turned out to be *the* means for money transfers. Nevertheless, the outbreak of the war also had its implications for the postal system. Operations within the empire were slightly better than the transfers to foreign destinations. İlyas was suggesting "urgent" (*müstacel*) telegrams instead of "regular" (*âdi*) ones, which started running late. Meanwhile the arrival of letters from Manchester began to take almost two weeks or more, whereas it used to take only a week.

The day of the declaration of a moratorium was also the first day of mobilization, which had an immediate impact on the brothers' agenda. All men between the ages of twenty and forty-five were immediately called for military service. Nevertheless the government allowed paid exemption on August 8. İlyas was eligible for paid exemption because he

had not gone through the drill yet at the time. But he started searching for positions and trades that were exempt from military service, such as bakers, barbers, and employees in shipping companies, to avoid any kind of payment, meanwhile regretting his belatedness in considering these options. Among the shipping companies he considered registering for were Hilal and Gümüşciyan. Although he paid a few visits to Gümüşciyan to register for positions exempt from military service, he ended up paying to be exempted. It was not possible to exempt Ali from military service because he had already gone through the drill. İlyas wrote a petition on behalf of Cemil to clarify his situation and ask for his exemption, as he was based in Manchester.

İlyas's attempts to exempt himself and his brothers not only from military service but also from paid exemption gave no support at a grassroots level to "the deep conviction that the country's survival could be secured only on the battlefield," as reflected by the elite through publications in the aftermath of the Balkan Wars. On the contrary, they set failing examples for national mobilization just as in the case of many other male heads of households for whom the welfare of their families came before the welfare of the state. The consequent wars that the empire had to go through should also have had an impact on male reluctance to join the military service and hence the failure of "the movement of awakening" (hareket-i intibahiye): "a process that could equip the people with patriotic passion and industry to fend off the dangers the empire faced." As commercial subjects of the empire, the brothers' interest lay more on the economic side of the awakening process.

Despite the dramatic political, social, and economic events taking place within and outside the empire, the brothers continued with their business: İlyas kept on informing his partners in the provinces regarding merchandise available for purchase in Istanbul and continued to discuss Ali's wish to buy a ship, which he had completely opposed before. He regarded this plan now with enthusiasm due to its possible allowance for exemption from military service and even suggested the United States as the place to buy it, while complaining to Cemil about the high prices and low qualities of the samples he sent. These instances point not only to the continuation of life despite everything but also to the Mataracızâde brothers' grip on the future regardless of all the doubts attached to it. Most of all, they are evidence of life as "normal" as possible in the aftermath of the Balkan Wars despite the outbreak of World War I. Other than referring to the expulsion of certain Greek traders, these commercial letters provide a history of continuity rather than rupture regarding

the commercial practices of the network. They deprive us of the imprints of a rupture embedded in Turkish history due to a particular subperiodization of the Young Turk era, which bases itself solely on political developments of the period: 1908–13 and 1913–18. This periodization makes it impossible even to imagine the possibility of such a commercial environment in the aftermath of the Balkan Wars.

İlyas referred to World War I as the "War of Europeans" (Avrupalılar muharebesi) or the "War between Infidels in Europe" (Avrupa'da kefereler beyninde muharebe). These phrases provide insights regarding the perception of the war at a grassroots level. İlyas perceived it as a war between "Europeans" in "Europe" and hence as an intra-European war rather than a war in which the Ottoman Empire would become one of the major actors. The arrival of the two legendary German battle cruisers Goeben and Breslau in Istanbul raised İlyas's suspicions regarding the Ottoman Empire, which he referred to as Turkey, entering the conflict.¹⁵ Interpreting the current situation as a war only between France and Germany, he wished for the victory of Germany as the best possible scenario in favor of the empire. Based on his comments we can argue that İlyas's awareness of the German-Ottoman alliance explains his pro-German sentiments, which were promoted by the political elite of the period. 16 It is also significant that he considered the empire's alliance with Germany a safety valve against possible internal conflicts before a possible foreign intrusion. İlyas interprets a possible French defeat of Germany as the starting point of internal conflicts within the empire before the beginning of the eventual end. This interpretation points to an expectation of possible revolts of the Greek and Armenian communities against the Ottoman state. Leaving aside the connection between İlyas's perception and reality, my focus remains on the presence of such an expectation. It actually points to the perception of a decline in the loyalty of the Greek and Armenian communities to the Ottoman state on the Muslim side. Nevertheless İlyas could not help wonder whether and with whom the Ottoman Empire would fight. In his view the Ottoman Empire appeared to be a possible actor only if Germany lost:

War: Today the battle cruisers *Goeben* and *Breslau* arrived in Istanbul. I wonder who we are going to fight with. If Germany wins, Turkey may perhaps be at ease. God forbid, if it does not, Turkey will be in ruins. Then there will not be any need to fight with other states. Turkey will not even be able to cope with the Greeks or the Armenians. God forbid, Germany is doing well for the time

being. God willing, it will go like this all the way and [Germany] will win. For the time being, it looks like a war between France and Germany. God willing, Germany will defeat France. When it defeats it, it looks like it is not going to fight with us, maybe Russia, maybe others. May God facilitate whatever is beneficial for us. Amen. What can you do, there is no reason to worry about it. This is the way of the world, the way of man. May God facilitate whatever is beneficial for us. Amen. With the respect due to the Prophet Muhammad, Amen, o Helper. (3 Ağustos, 1330/August 16, 1914)

İlyas's witnessing of the soldiers embarking on ships on the Bosphorus two days after the arrival of the battle cruisers *Goeben* and *Breslau* evoked the possibility of a possible Ottoman attack on Russia and made him finalize his decision regarding the near future welfare of the family, about which he had been worried ever since the outbreak of the war. Ali should send the Rize branch to Istanbul with food supplies (hard biscuits, braised meat, and so forth) sufficient for almost eight months. Ali was notified of this decision through a telegraphic note:

On my way to Istanbul this morning, I noticed three/five boatloads of soldiers. Where they are headed is unknown. Upon the arrival of this letter, my brother, immediately procure about one hundred and fifty okkas of hard biscuit, braised meat, etc., to last five/six or maybe to eight months. This is of the outmost importance. Hurry or it will be too late; better safe than sorry. If people do not make such attempts there and in case someone asks when you order the hard biscuits, just say that it is for someone in Trabzon, he will give it to the soldiers, you see that soldiers are being dispatched to Trabzon by boats. Send father, my mother, and the children with as many supplies as possible without delay. There may be no boats left later. Just in case.

Make sure you find a way to obtain the hard biscuits. (5 Ağustos 1330/August 18, 1914)

Although the amount and type of food mentioned looks like troop supplies with about 150 okkas (almost 200 kg) of hard biscuit, braised meat, and so forth the size of the order can also be explained by the level of panic and the expected duration of the war. Such caution should not be a surprise if we remember the Ottomans' familiarity with war

situations since the beginning of the decade. İlyas, also aware of the largeness of the amount, warned his brother Ali to present it as supplies for troops dispatched to Trabzon in case anyone asked.

Underlining the significance and the urgency of this task, İlyas phrased it as an occasion that they would regret if they failed to accomplish this. A similar secrecy was also acknowledged for the move of the extended family from Rize to Istanbul. İlyas even offered an alternative explanation to be used in response to curious inquiries about the family's move:

You tell those who hear about their [the family's] move to Istanbul and question the reason behind it: Now, I am a soldier, if they let me, it is only provisory. It is not clear how many days I will be able to stay. It may happen that they call me back tomorrow; nevertheless I always wanted to send them [the family] to Istanbul. My mother is not well. If possible, she may also go to the thermal spring in Bursa. Although this is not the time to spend money, it is the time to go. That is why I am sending them. (6 Ağustos 1330/August 19, 1914)

The level of secrecy, which was considered almost a given in their commercial practices and which also reappeared in the brothers' discussion of the Greek expulsions from the empire, points to two issues. First, it once again reminds us of the slow pace at which even important news traveled in the absence of proper connections with the capital. Second, it indicates the significance of self-interest not only in commercial practice but also in life in general. The brothers' interest in the family did not extend beyond their parents, despite the large size of the extended family. The protection of their own branch of the family and of their business, itself centered on the family, appears to have been the ultimate goal in the chaotic environment of the time.

İlyas's panic about a possible Russian occupation of the eastern Black Sea area seems to have receded as he realized that the empire's active participation in the war would still require more time, at least a month. This underlines not only a certain level of familiarity with possible war situations but also that life was literally lived on a daily basis at the time. Crucial decisions regarding his welfare and his family's had to be made by rule of thumb even in the center, which may allow us to imagine the level of ignorance at a grassroots level in the rest of the empire. History did not prove İlyas's intuitions wrong. Almost a month later the Ottoman

Empire entered World War I with a Russian attack, which followed the Ottoman attack against Odessa and Sevastopol on the Black Sea coast of Anatolia, beginning on the first day of November.¹⁷

I sent you a telegram today telling you to postpone the family's move here. Because, my brother, those days were extremely busy and it looked like the war with Russia would start any time soon. Because of that, I wrote that stringently, but these days things seem looser. What I mean is that although the recruitment of soldiers is still going on regularly, it seems that even if the war might be with Russia, its beginning will take more than a month. Let me write you this, so that there will not be a need to write all the time and action can be taken accordingly. If the children will not be sent from here, I will write again if necessary. And you will see there as well, if the war with Russia begins, without considering any need for further communication, immediately send our father, mother, and children with the first steamer. Or you can send them now, and they will have gone on a tour. As you wish, my brother. (13 Ağustos 1330/August 26, 1914)

İlyas was also worried about Cemil's situation. Discussing with his older brother whether Cemil should stay in Manchester or head back home, he was trying to comfort his younger brother not to worry about anything and follow the other Ottoman Muslim traders regarding his return to the homeland. Within the first half of the month of September both brothers were convinced that Cemil should return home. İlyas had some suggestions regarding the route that he should follow, once again based on information that he was able to gather within his own environment by rule of thumb: "My brother [Ali] wrote you to come whenever you may consider appropriate and convenient. Probably it is appropriate to come. As you wish. I heard here, in case you come, you should take the route to Holland and then to Germany. As a matter of fact, the German government buys tickets for passengers wearing a fez and sends them beyond the borders." From some tips provided by the correspondence between İlyas and Ali we learn that Cemil followed the route from Marseilles to Thessaloniki and arrived in Istanbul in the second half of October.

Returning to the commercial activities of the brothers after the outbreak of the war, the *manat* (*moneta* in Russian) was one of the commonly used currencies of exchange—in addition to the Ottoman and English

pounds—in the commercial transactions of the brothers, especially with their partners in the eastern Black Sea, and became merchandise itself.¹⁹ Due to the stagnation of commerce in general, exchanging manats for Ottoman liras was an emerging market exploited by the brothers and their commercial partners in the eastern Black Sea. Selling the rubles that they bought in the eastern Black Sea in Istanbul turned out to be their only active trade that allowed a cash flow during the first months of the war. For a full exploitation of this business option, İlyas was persistent in directing all the available cash of the trading house in its Istanbul and Manchester branches to the Rize branch. Due to the problems faced in wire transfers after the declaration of a moratorium, rubles were transported in bundles through the postal service between the eastern Black Sea and Istanbul.

Manat: today they buy ten and a half manats for one lira in the market. You can buy eleven and a half or twelve manats for one lira. You buy and send and you do not keep the manats you buy with you. Send them immediately so that we can change them on time. Circumstances are bad; send whatever you buy immediately by post. (4 Ağustos 1330/August 17, 1914)

Speculative operations on commercial opportunities that the war might create for the brothers' business appeared gradually but with increasing significance in their daily agenda. Within the weeks following the outbreak of the war İlyas's initial commercial insights centered on prices: he was expecting an increase in the price of yarn during and after the war, while reporting on an already evident increase in the price of gas in Istanbul, which used to be imported from Russia. With the Russian Empire entering World War I, Romania appeared as a possible alternative for importing gas. Ali wanted to become partners with a certain Mânizâde Hadji İbrahim Efendi, who was considering importing gas from Romania. Such trade would allow them to stock gas in case Romania entered the war as well.

İlyas, hearing of the decrease in the price of hazelnuts in Giresun by the end of August, suggested stocking around thirty to forty thousand okes (over fifty tons) of this product and also underlined that they should be alert regarding similar opportunities. Meanwhile Ali considered a partnership with a certain Sarı Mahmudzâde Eşref Efendi in Giresun with a view to exporting hazelnuts to the United States. He planned to send Cemil from Manchester to the United States, but the closing of the

Dardanelles Strait in late September and the current problems in money transfers set obstacles to the realization of his plan. Still, he asked Cemil to find out about the prices of both shelled and kernel hazelnuts in the United States while he was still in Manchester. Although the export of hazelnuts to the United States remained an idea, Ali was quite insistent on a partnership with the aforementioned Sarı Mahmudzâde Eşref Efendi, who was about to sell 2,000 sacks of hazelnuts to either Istanbul or Romania with a Greek partner.

The available collection of letters provides no evidence regarding the realization of any of the commercial projects developed around the idea of stocking supplies of crucial importance in a war situation. Such commercial ventures would have been considered in any war situation due to the gradual limitations and eventual end of the circulation of goods, money, and traders because of the closing down of the trade routes. Stocking subsistence goods appears to have been one of the only possible trading options available to replace interregional commercial transactions, which were probably only interrupted and would continue in the future, according to the brothers' understanding. Nevertheless today we know that the outbreak of World War I had a much larger impact on the world economy, to the extent of bringing the first wave of globalization to an end. The passage below, in addition to displaying the level of panic, makes it quite explicit that the brothers were searching for commercial alternatives by rule of thumb as well they did in other daily matters. Despite their readiness to launch into any business possibility, İlyas sounds quite lost regarding where to begin:

It is required to engage in whatever possible during this war time. There or here? If here, the flour business is convenient. Probably there are also more convenient ones. If we engage in the flour business, the government will confiscate and seize every day. Now, it comes to my mind, it would not quite take supplies like flour, because it is the food of the nation. (6 Ağustos 1330/August 19, 1914)

Ali, the brother in Rize, actually had an eye on the flour business far before the outbreak of World War I. By the beginning of May 1914 İlyas had suggested a certain Naci Bey, the former publisher of the *Meşveret* (Consultation) newspaper in Trabzon,²⁰ as a possible partner. Naci Bey, after selling his printing house, had moved to Istanbul for possible business opportunities, but his interest mainly lay in the flour business. He

had been introduced and recommended to İlyas as a notable and hard-working prospective partner by the afore-mentioned Giresunlu Sarı Mahmudzâde Eşref Efendi, one of the brothers' well-trusted commercial partners. İlyas had been encouraging his brother to engage in a partnership with this Naci Bey not only because he was convinced of his recommended qualities but mostly because he saw a future in the flour business. The increase in the number of Muslim bakeries was one of the main incentives in this regard. Despite İlyas's insistence, the commercial correspondence provides no evidence regarding the realization of this partnership. The passage above was the last mention of this business opportunity.

By the beginning of September İlyas was convinced of the availability of business opportunities ready for exploitation in Istanbul, but he had also become aware that it would require reaching out to circles around the government. The brothers would need to consult a few of their acquaintances, one of them being the aforementioned Naci Bey, who had become the Trabzon deputy in parliament by then. The brothers possibly intended to reach out to government circles through the help of this Naci Bey. But once again the correspondence offers no evidence regarding the realization of such a connection. The passage below is the last time his name was mentioned. Nevertheless the need and will to reach out to government circles, which only appeared after the outbreak of World War I, points to the emergence of a new actor in the economic sphere: the government, as the ultimate buyer of subsistence supplies during the war.

Business: Maybe it is more convenient to do it here. Yes, there are a certain number of businesses, in case it may be done, the government will buy. It may be possible in case a part of the government might be reached through the intermediary of Naci and Sudi. Come whenever you may consider convenient. Money is also needed for business. (23 Ağustos 1330/September 5, 1914)

With the outbreak of World War I the indirect interference of the government in the economic sphere that began with the boycotts against non-Muslims and discourse of a national economy became direct and eventually paved its way to complete domination in the war years. The creation of the expected "boom" in the number of Muslim entrepreneurs could only be achieved with the government's domination over both political and economic spheres.

WORLD WAR I: AN EPILOGUE AND A PROLOGUE

The main theme shared by all instances depicted in the commercial correspondence (whether they were the result of the inner dynamics of the network or of broader contexts such as the economics and politics of the period) was the financial hardship of the times. This point is quite overlooked in discussions on boycotts against non-Muslims and their deportation from the empire in the aftermath of the Balkan Wars in the current literature. Instead emphasis is put on nationalist motives of the political elite that are assumed to be simultaneously applauded and assimilated by the Muslim community of the empire.

By referring to some of these instances this work attempts to question some of the basic assumptions of the current literature. They are not only constantly repeated but also used for broad generalizations and to support arguments in crucial discussions concerning the period. If the Muslim community was in full appreciation of and compliance with the economic and political policies of the CUP in the aftermath of the Balkan Wars, we need to understand why the brothers did not take part in the boycotts, why they attempted in every possible way to get exempted from military service, and why they did not reach out to government circles despite their full awareness of the preliminary offers of a nascent national economy before the outbreak of World War I. Discussions revolving around these human predicaments point to the significance of human agency, which is also neglected in the discussions of the current literature. The assumption of full-fledged success of a nascent nationalism project immediately after the Balkan Wars argues for an immediate awareness and assimilation of national consciousness by the Muslim community all over the empire, evenly and simultaneously, disregarding the significance of local experience or inexperience. Based on this assumption, the traders under study here failed to meet the "desired" level of national consciousness. The context and frequency of such failures within the Muslim community of the period, though perhaps hard to estimate, still require some consideration in order to understand this complex and unstable period. This can only be achieved through a return to the significant role that human agents played in such situations and a revision of the level of national consciousness that could possibly be reached, taking into consideration the level of (il)literacy and the pace of mass communication at the time.

All the entrepreneurial attempts described here point to a discrepancy between the political economy discourse of the national economy,

seen as determining the economic discourse and program of the Second Constitutional Era and the commercial "reality" itself. Despite the lack of evidence regarding the exploitation of any of the business possibilities promised by a nascent national economy, those instances highlight a few significant points. First, despite the rich literature based on the national economy program and discourse referring to the active pro-Muslim stance and actions of the government in the economic sphere, the CUP still appears as a ghostly figure to the Muslim traders under scrutiny. The Greek traders appear as the only parties directly but negatively affected by this program. Other than the unfulfilled expectations and promises, the instances display no direct or indirect support from the government, which may be explained through the distance of the brothers from such circles. This points to the presence of Muslim entrepreneurs, who were able to operate on their own feet just like their non-Muslim partners, be they Greek, Armenian, Jewish, or of any other background, despite the presence of a nascent national propaganda and preliminary offers of a national economy. Muslim traders who were also standing on their own feet just like their Greek or Armenian partners appear as economic actors within the imperial economic sphere even after the Balkan Wars. Commercial transactions between traders from different ethno-religious communities continued despite all the "harm" experienced during the former years. Hence we do not necessarily owe the presence of Muslim entrepreneurs in the economic sphere of the empire to the departure of their non-Muslim partners, as suggested by Zürcher in his discussion of the meaninglessness of any subperiodization for the Young Turk era based on economic developments: "A separate discussion, for example, of the growth of an industrial and commercial bourgeoisie in the Ottoman Empire and the early republic is meaningless without reference to the disappearance of the Armenians and the Greeks, which was caused by political and ideological developments, not by any underlying law of economics."21

This assumption is actually based on a lacuna in research on Muslim entrepreneurs, especially traders, due to the absence of direct sources such as the commercial correspondence discussed here. This assumption is misleading not only for Turkish history but for historiography as well. In regard to Turkish history it disregards the presence of maybe not a class but a group of Muslim entrepreneurs integrated not only into the imperial commercial networks but also into the world economic system within their own limitations but through fair trade without the supportive hand of the government. Exploitation of this historically misleading

assumption as a justification for periodization in Turkish historiography is even more problematic because historical works basing their arguments on this particular periodization are mainly replicating the aforementioned disregard. Acknowledgment of the presence of Muslim commercial actors in the Ottoman economic sphere before the departure of their non-Muslim partners would require a new periodization based on a possible "underlying law of economics."

Before going into this last point I would like to discuss the formation process of this particular trading house and its network. If they were not products of the national economy program and discourse of the Second Constitutional Period as previously argued, then we need to understand their formation process, which requires a travel back in time from 1914 to the beginning of the nineteenth century. The brothers represented the third generation of a mercantile family. In this regard their commercial practices and mentality were the outcome of a commercial tradition accumulated over a century rather than of the national economy, and this is probably also true of all or most of their commercial partners in the network, regardless of the religious or ethnic divides. If this is the case, then how shall we place this network in comparison to the description of large businesses in Turkey provided by Ayşe Buğra based on her study on state-business relations in Turkey?

Turkish big business firms do not have a long history. They are fairly recent enterprises that were formed mainly by individuals who were either small merchants or civil servants, with a very small initial capital outlay and with the support of their family and especially the support of the state. What we have is essentially a state-created bourgeoisie that does not have a long tradition of wealth, social status, or expertise in a given line of activity. This bourgeoisie largely owes its social status to its relations with the state. It is mainly the nature of these state-business relations that determines the behavioral characteristics of Turkish business owners as reflected in the typical organizational structure of big business firms, the holding companies.²²

The contrast between the profiles of the republican entrepreneurs as defined in this passage and those under scrutiny points to a rupture rather than a continuity between the imperial and the republican business cultures and practices. In current Turkish historiography the rupture is always assumed to be in terms of non-Muslims, whereas my work argues for the existence of the same rupture for an Ottoman Muslim bourgeoisie in formation integrated into the world economy since the beginning of the nineteenth century. The national economy program of

the Second Constitutional period contributed to this formation process in the aftermath of the Balkan Wars, resulting in the creation of a new group of entrepreneurs whose profile is different from the profile of those under study here. While the new group was being created through violence, threat, and coercion, the already established group was called upon for a transformation via the national economy program.

Although this rupture began with the indirect intervention of the government in the economic sphere in the wake of the Balkan Wars, the actual turning point was the outbreak of World War I. With the appearance of the government as an actor in the economic sphere right after this and hence the government's direct intervention as the ultimate buyer of subsistence supplies during the war, the so-called support of the state started to be taken for granted as a means of capital accumulation, which gradually led to creation of a Muslim-Turkish bourgeoisie. In this regard the boom in Muslim entrepreneurs targeted by the national economy program was to be accomplished after the beginning of World War I, yielding its real results during the republican era.

The acknowledgment of the presence of an Ottoman Muslim bourgeoisie in formation and in integration with the world economy requires the development of a new periodization for the economic and business history of the Second Constitutional Period. The evidence in this study suggests that "1908–14" and "1914–18" might constitute a possible subperiodization of the Young Turk era based on both economic and political developments of the period, rather than the subperiodization "1908–13" and "1913–18," which seems based solely on political developments.

NOTES

The words of the epigraph belong to Sano Halo, one of the Greeks expelled from her village in Fatsa on the Anatolian coast of the Black Sea, in her biography written by her daughter: Thea Halo, *Not Even My Name*. I am thankful to Professor Arzu Öztürkmen for bringing this work to my attention.

- Zafer Toprak, "Cihan Harbi'nin Provası Balkan Harbi"; Richard Hall, The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913.
- 2. Zafer Toprak, *Türkiye'de "Milli İktisat"*; Zafer Toprak, *Milli İktisat—Milli Burjuvazi*; Y. Doğan Çetinkaya, "Muslim Merchants and Working-Class in Action"; Ahmet Kuyaş, ed., *Tarih 1839–1939*.
- 3. The rules and regulations according to which the commercial books were to be kept were deliberately elaborated within the newly formulated Commercial Law. They could be used as evidence in court in case of conflicts between merchants, so it was important to follow the stated rules and regulations. Macit M. Kenanoğlu, Ticaret Kanunnâmesi ve Mecelle İşiğında Osmanlı Ticaret Hukuku, 84.

- 4. Roger Owen and Şevket Pamuk, A History of Middle East Economies in the Twentieth Century.
- See the quotations below for standard usage of this phrase within the available commercial correspondence.
- 6. Letter dated 30 Mayıs 1330 (June 12, 1914).
- 7. Letter dated 19 Temmuz 1330 (August 1, 1914).
- 8. Edhem Eldem, A History of the Ottoman Bank, 265.
- 9. Letter dated 21 Temmuz 1330 (August 3, 1914)
- 10. Letter dated 19 Temmuz 1330 (August 1, 1914)
- 11. The bloody takeover of the Sublime Porte on January 23, 1913, under the leadership of Enver Bey, brought to power a new government and marked the beginning of the increased one-party rule under the CUP. Mustafa Aksakal, *The Ottoman Road to War in 1914*, 39.
- 12. Ibid. See chapter 2 of this book for a well-elaborated discussion of the focus of Ottoman political writing on the mobilization of all segments of society in the defense of the empire after the Balkan Wars.
- 13. Ibid., 19.
- 14. Erik J. Zürcher, Turkey: A Modern History, 4.
- 15. Aksakal's work enlightens the controversial escape of the *Goeben* and *Breslau* battle cruisers into the Ottoman Straits. Based on the report of Baron Hans von Wangenheim, the German ambassador in Istanbul, Aksakal claims that it was Enver Paşa who requested that the two warships join the Ottoman fleet in Istanbul. His request was supported by both the German ambassador and the German general Otto Liman von Sanders, the head of the German military mission to the Ottoman Empire. Aksakal, *The Ottoman Road to War in 1914*, 103.
- 16. In his explanation of how the Ottoman Empire entered the war in his memoir, Talat Bey, the Ottoman minister of the interior, underlines the common belief on the Ottoman side that Turkey would preserve its presence and sovereignty only in an undefeated Germany and Austrian alliance. Talat Paşa, *Talât Paşa'nın Anıları* (1994), 36.
- 17. Rize was under Russian invasion between March 6, 1916, and March 2, 1918. Makbule Sarıkaya, *Milli Mücadele Döneminde Rize*, 31–46.
- 18. Letter dated 28 Ağustos 1330 (September 10, 1914).
- 19. The manat was one of the currencies of exchange used in the Russian Empire.
- 20. According to the information provided by Odabaşıoğlu, the newspaper Meşveret started to be published in Trabzon in 1909 and was published twice a week on Wednesdays and Saturdays in the Meşveret printing house. Naci Bey was cited as the licensee and the mandate manager in the masthead of the newspaper. The newspaper introduced itself as an "Ottoman newspaper serving thought and freedom" (fikir ve hürriyete hadim Osmanlı gazetesidir). Cumhur Odabaşıoğlu, Trabzon, Doğu Karadeniz Gazete ve Mecmuaları, 1869–1928, 36–37.
- 21. Zürcher, Turkey: A Modern History, 4.
- 22. Ayşe Buğra, "Tale of Two Cities," 99.

When a Military Problem Became a Social Issue

Ottoman Desertions and Deserters in World War I

Mehmet Beşikçi

Historians usually agree that World War I can be categorized as a "total war" in terms of its intensity and extensity. This concept, which has been used to describe the changing nature of warfare in the modern era from the mid-nineteenth century onward, mainly refers to a process in which the home front and the battlefield became closely intertwined due to the need to mobilize all resources to keep up with the ever-demanding war effort. This totality resulted from a combination of various factors, which included "industrialized mass society, nationalism, chauvinism, and racism, the participation of the masses in politics, mass armies equipped and provisioned with modern weapons, industrialized economies that provided the means for large-scale destruction, and the erosion of distinctions between soldiers and civilians." Needless to say, this new quality of warfare also meant that wars would be much more catastrophic, demanding permanent manpower on vast scales from society at large.

World War I was a long and multifront war of attrition for all the belligerents, including the Ottoman Empire. Although the nature of modern warfare had already begun to transform in the nineteenth century, the field of mobilization became much more vital for any belligerent's war effort during World War I. In fact this was where the total character of the war was most visible, where the interconnection of the home front and the battlefront became most significant. To meet the huge and permanent demand for manpower in a prolonged war, the military and civilian spheres had to work together. The state needed to permeate deeper

levels of society with new mechanisms of governmentality to supervise its demographic resource more efficiently. Society had to be convinced to participate in this mobilization through new means of modern propaganda. Transportation and logistical infrastructures had to be mobilized to accommodate newly enlisted masses of people. The military not only had to train these enlisted man to fight but also had to inculcate them with the "virtues" of dying on the battlefront for the fatherland. Therefore, for historical research, a comprehensive analysis of manpower mobilization of a belligerent country in World War I (in our case the Ottoman Empire) has great potential to provide a great contribution to the general understanding of that country's war experience in many respects.

The overall character of World War I was not standardized but varied in accordance with the infrastructural development level of each belligerent country. In this sense the Ottoman Empire's total war experience did not have the same intensity as the experience of countries like Britain and Germany in respects such as mobilizing an industrial economy and provisioning the army with domestically produced modern weapons. But the Ottoman Empire did experience certain qualities of total warfare in various fields, and manpower mobilization was definitely one of them. Throughout the war the Ottoman state managed to supply enough men for combat on all the major fronts scattered across a vast geography, from the Caucasus to Mesopotamia, from the Dardanelles to Sinai-Palestine, and from Galicia to Azerbaijan. Out of its total population of some 22-23 million, the Ottoman Empire successfully mobilized a total of some 2,900,000 men.³ This ratio (total men mobilized/total population) amounts to approximately 13 percent. This is not bad at all compared to some major European powers. For example, the same ratio was 15.1 in Austria-Hungary, 15.6 in Italy, and 19.8 in Germany. In fact when compared to the failure of Ottoman mobilization during the Balkan Wars of 1912–13, during which the Ottoman war mechanism could mobilize only 290,000 men out of a population of 24 million,⁵ the Ottoman experience in World War I can even be considered a success story. Accordingly, the endurance level of the Ottoman armies increased remarkably. While given almost no chance as a worthy partner for an alliance at the beginning of the war, the Ottoman troops tenaciously remained on the battlefront until the end of the war.6

Of course, it was not a success story in realistic terms. In fact the Ottoman mobilization of manpower in World War I struggled with important problems. This chapter is about one such major problem: desertion.

While the Ottoman military did not experience large-scale military mutinies, such as those in France in 1917,⁷ the great number of desertions (about 17 percent of all enlisted men) constituted one of the major factors that eroded the Ottoman mobilization effort and war performance. As discussed below, the scale of the problem was so vast that it not only constituted a grave military issue but also became a social issue threatening domestic security throughout the war years.⁸

The issue of Ottoman desertion in World War I has been largely ignored in Ottoman-Turkish historiography. It has either been treated as a minor military problem or attributed, especially by nationalist-minded historians, to "non-Turkish" Ottoman subjects—Armenians, Greeks, and Arabs. In reality the numerical extent of desertion was so large and the demographic composition of deserters so diverse that it included nearly every ethnic or religious group, including Muslim Turks. In fact, given that Muslim Turks were the majority of both the Ottoman population and the enlisted men in the armed forces, their case is much more significant. Therefore this chapter mainly focuses on them. Furthermore, desertion became a major social problem, requiring measures on the part of not only the military but also the state authority on the entire home front, which in turn opened up new channels for the state to penetrate society.

This chapter focuses primarily on the Muslim population of Anatolia. First, I give a general panorama of the size of the desertion problem and explore the reasons for desertion as explained by military authorities and, where possible, also by deserters themselves. The act of desertion could be seen as a form of resistance by ordinary enlisted men to an imposed duty under unbearable conditions that could not be justified anymore in their eyes. Second, neither the presumed strong Ottoman-Turkish military culture condemning desertion nor severe penal laws could prevent desertion from becoming a major problem. The scale of desertion showed the limits of the Ottoman conscription system in total war conditions. Third, elaborating on the lifestyle of deserters, this chapter explores how they survived after they deserted. While many deserters chose to hide near their own villages and received shelter from fellow villagers, many others resorted to brigandage by forming armed bands, generally along ethnic and religious lines. The proliferation of these bands of deserters turned brigands, along with other deserters who did not turn brigands but still roamed the countryside, constituted a threat to state authority as it attempted to maintain order.

THE EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM

Technically desertion means leaving active military service without permission, with the intent of remaining away indefinitely. Especially when numerical figures are concerned, however, Ottoman documents and even secondary sources seem to use the term in a broader sense, which also includes those who did not obey the call to service during mobilization, those who did not present themselves at recruiting offices when they reached the age for military duty (draft evaders), and those who unilaterally extended their leave. Perhaps with the intention of covering all these cases, both archival documents and secondary sources sometimes use the more general term "military fugitive" (asker kaçağı) instead of "deserter" (firârî). Therefore it should be noted that in the Ottoman context statistics on desertions necessarily include all those who "deserted" in the larger and all-inclusive sense of the term.

The existing statistical data on Ottoman desertions in World War I are still raw. The available data that can be accessed in the archives provide us with round total numbers at a very general level or with some fragmentary sets of figures in regard to specific regions during specific periods, which are usually scattered and lack a systematic character. Significant mid-level figures such as the precise and cumulative numbers of desertions for each year of the war, for each major front throughout the war, or for different ethnic-religious groups are greatly lacking (or still wait to be compiled, systematized, and cross-checked). Yet the available statistics actually suffice to show the remarkable extent and seriousness of the desertion problem in the Ottoman war experience.

The official casualty statistics of World War I, which were issued by Ottoman authorities just after the war, do not provide a specific set of figure for desertions. They are included under a more general heading of "deserters, POWs, sick, missing," the total number of which is 1,565,000. This remarkably high number amounts to almost 70 percent of the total number of all casualties, which is 2,290,000. From various relevant sources, both primary and secondary, we are able to estimate that the number of desertions occupied a considerable place in this figure. The problem of desertion in the Ottoman army intensified remarkably in the second half of the war. For example, İsmet İnönü, a staff officer during World War I (and the second president of the Republic of Turkey), estimated that the number of deserters in 1918 alone was about 300,000. In his words, "this was a very high number that had no other equivalent in our history." The

chief of the German military mission in the Ottoman Empire during the war, Otto Liman von Sanders, said in a report entitled "Condition of the Turkish Army Today" in December 1917 that desertions from the Ottoman army had exceeded all bounds and the army had more than 300,000 desertions at that time. 12 According to journalist-scholar Ahmed Emin Yalman, who claimed that he had access to the official military sources related to the Ottoman casualties during World War I, desertions reached 300,000 at the beginning of 1917, and the aggregate number of deserters amounted to more than 500,000 by the summer of 1918. 13 Historian Edward J. Erickson cross-checked all the available information in the Turkish General Staff's official military history of World War I and relevant sources and confirms the estimated total number of Ottoman desertions as 500,000.14 Historian Erik J. Zürcher not only agrees with this number but also compares the Ottoman desertion figures to those of the German army, which suffered 130,000-150,000 desertions during the war. Considering that around 13.5 million men were drafted in Germany during World War I, the proportion of deserters to the total number of drafted men was only about 1 percent.¹⁵ The same proportion was slightly higher than 1 percent in the British armed forces. 16 In terms of actual numbers of desertions, rather than proportions, the Russian case is comparable to that of the Ottomans: 500,000 soldiers deserted during the first year of war.¹⁷ The Italian army represents a similar case. In the Battle of Caporetto in 1917 more than 350,000 men deserted from the Italian army and roamed the countryside. 18 While there are comparable cases, however, it is evident that the extent of the problem in the Ottoman army was quite wide and remarkable. Given the total number of enlisted men in the Ottoman military throughout the war (2,850,000), the total number of deserters (500,000) amounts to more than one-sixth, over 17 percent of all the men enlisted during the war.¹⁹

Detailed and categorized Ottoman statistical data are greatly lacking for specific years and fronts of the Ottoman war experience. But various significant specific examples may be used not only to confirm the gravity of the extent of the problem but also to make some specific comments to help us explore more about the evolution of the problem than the total numbers could imply. For example, the German consul in Erzurum reported in a telegram on June 2, 1915, that one-third of the troops gathered in the camps of the Third Army in Eastern Anatolia had fallen sick and that "another one-third had deserted on the march to the army." On the Caucasus front, after the Ottoman forces were defeated by the Russian forces, the Ottoman Third Army alone had about 50,000 deserters by

the winter of 1916.²¹ Desertions in the Third Army zone (which covered roughly eastern-northeastern Anatolia) were at such a high level that even the Ottoman Interior Ministry complained about the proliferation of desertion cases (kesretle firâr vakaları) in this zone. The Interior Ministry warned its local administrators and officials in the region on May 18, 1915, that both lack of security measures and carelessness on their part in providing good camping and resting conditions for the troops could contribute to desertions.²² According to a British military intelligence report dated October 29, 1917, in the mountainous areas of the Hizan district alone (located east of Bitlis in eastern Anatolia), about 30,000 had deserted by that date. They were mostly ethnic Kurds, who had fought as irregular units in the Ottoman army on the eastern front.²³ In the last year of the war Liman von Sanders complained in a telegram to German ambassador Count Johann von Bernstorff in Istanbul about poor provisions and logistics in the Ottoman armed forces and said that "the number of Turkish deserters was higher today than that of men under arms."²⁴

WHOSE PROBLEM?

The Ottoman Empire was still a multiethnic and multireligious entity during World War I. Nearly every ethnic or religious group in the empire is represented among the deserters. For example, cases of Armenian desertions seem to have been widespread in the early phase of the war.²⁵ This situation constituted a reason for Ottoman authorities to label Armenians as "unreliable" and to employ them in the disarmed labor battalions.²⁶ Desertions among Ottoman Greeks were not a rare phenomenon either; Greeks even coined a specific term for their deserters, "the attic battalions," to describe those who hid in the attics of their buildings to avoid Ottoman recruitment authorities.²⁷ This reluctance in regard to compulsory military service was not much different for Ottoman Jews. Among various methods to avoid service, obtaining a false medical report declaring an individual unfit for military service was apparently quite popular among them.²⁸ Similarly, desertions of Ottoman Arab soldiers were also frequent, especially in the second half of the war.²⁹ The most significant share of desertions belonged to "Anatolian Muslims." This term means mainly Turks (as a majority), Kurds, and to a lesser extent Circassian and Laz elements. These groups constituted not only the majority of the Ottoman population but also the bulk of the enlisted men in the Ottoman army. Although the available statistics do not provide us with detailed and accurate information about the exact proportions of different ethnic-religious groups in the Ottoman army, we can still make some significant projections. For example, Hüseyin Hüsnü Emir (Erkilet), who was a deputy chief of staff in the Yıldırım Army Group formed in the last year of the war, noted in a report on the ethnic composition of infantry divisions that 66 percent of the troops were Turkish, 26 percent were Arab, and 8 percent were others.³⁰ A more general projection can be made in this respect by assuming that every ethnic or religious group was represented in the armed forces according to its proportion in the general population of the empire. Out of a total of about 23 million people in early 1914, the approximate ratios of major groups in the Ottoman armed forces would be as follows: 47 percent Turks and Anatolian Muslims, 37 percent Arabs, 8 percent Ottoman Greeks, 7 percent Armenians, and 1 percent Jews. 31 Moreover, the available desertion statistics already reveal the significant share of Anatolian Muslims. For example, a report on deserters in the province of Aydın, covering the period from the beginning of mobilization (August 2, 1914) to June 1916, shows that Muslims constituted the majority of deserters (28,950 out of a total of 49,228).32

REASONS

Neither the presumed strong Ottoman/Turkish military culture condemning desertion nor severe penal laws or references to the Islamic injunctions against avoiding military service could prevent desertion from becoming a major problem. The reasons for desertion varied. The most common ones, mentioned in the interrogation reports of deserters captured by Ottoman authorities, and of those captured by the British in Iraq and Palestine, include physical and mental exhaustion stemming from dire conditions at the front, despair and frustration resulting from the prolongation of the war, abuse at the hands of officers, the impossibility of obtaining home leaves, and reactions to the almost unlimited extension of the term of service.³³ Although almost all captured deserters expressed regret about what they did, they also implicitly or explicitly explained that they did it as a last resort, when the conditions became unbearable and intolerable. Although conscription was an obligatory form of military service, the enlisted men could still see a tacit contractual aspect in it. An individual potential draftee was legally obliged to enlist, but this obligation was accepted as long as certain basic expectations of the draftee (such as provision of basic daily needs, fair treatment,

reasonable term of service, continuation of his belief in the legitimacy of the service, and providing for his family while he was away) were met by the authorities.

Thousands of deserters, of course, could not be caught for a long time. Many of them turned into brigands to survive, forming armed bands, ranging in size from about a dozen to a few hundred people. Such armed bands, which were usually based on common ethnic and religious ties, presented a major security threat across Anatolia. The troubles that they caused reached an intolerable level in the later phase of the war. A telegram sent by interior minister Talat Paşa to all local administrative units on June 1, 1918, complained that murders committed by bands of deserter-brigands were occurring in almost every corner of the country.³⁴ In addition to murder, the more routine crimes included pillaging and robbing people in villages and towns.³⁵

PUNISHMENT, PREVENTIVE MEASURES, AND ATTEMPTS TO REMOBILIZE

This turned desertion into a much larger issue of public security, which required the state to reorganize its gendarmerie to cope with the problem. But some examples show that roaming deserters in the Ottoman countryside were not treated as complete outcasts by local populations. On the contrary, quite a few of them could easily hide in the vicinity of their own villages and were provided with shelter and food. Ottoman military authorities often note the support of the local populations and lament that this encouraged further desertions. The provided with shelter and food the local populations and lament that this encouraged further desertions.

It is even difficult to argue that deserters were treated as complete outcasts by the state. When the need for military labor was so pressing and the number of deserters was so high, Ottoman authorities always looked for a way of restoring deserters to service during World War I. Although military law required the death penalty for deserters, authorities typically reserved it for repeat offenders and those who committed serious crimes during their absence. Milder forms of punishment such as beating or imprisonment were usually applied to those who were caught during or after their first attempt.³⁸ More importantly, three general amnesties were issued for all deserters on behalf of the sultan. The first one of these came as early as the declaration of mobilization (August 6, 1914), the second on June 28, 1915, and the third in the last year of the war (July 15, 1918).³⁹ These promised pardon for deserters who would surrender to the

authorities within a specified time. The objective of all three amnesties was basically to put the deserted members of the military back in service, which would also help decrease the security problem in the countryside.

Other measures were designed to recover the deserters, which were implemented in the absence of an amnesty. For example, the Interior Ministry circulated an announcement to all local administrative units on September 21, 1918, stating that deserters surrendering of their own will could be enlisted as gendarmes if they met the necessary criteria for eligibility. Such surrendered deserters were usually employed in pursuit squads formed by the Ottoman gendarmerie to capture deserters and fight armed bands in the Anatolian provinces.

Such measures were not entirely ineffective, but Ottoman authorities continued to struggle with the problem of desertion until the end of the war. It remained a major factor that eroded the Ottoman performance on the battlefield and challenged state authority on the home front. According to the official Ottoman statistics, the number of enlisted men under arms was 560,000 when the Mudros Armistice was signed on October 30, 1918.⁴¹ The total number of desertions had reached almost the same level by that time.

CONCLUSION: THE END OF WORLD WAR I AND AFTERWARD

But it should also be noted that the gendarmerie (and other recruitment control mechanisms), reorganized in this process, played a key role in this struggle. The state was never completely successful in tackling the issue, although it was able to establish a reinforced basis for internal security in Anatolia. This internal security mechanism helped the remobilization effort during the Turkish National Struggle of 1919–22, which resulted in the creation of the Turkish nation-state.

The cumulative experience resulting from the struggle with the problem of desertion seems to have contributed to the success of the Ankara government's remobilization effort during the National Struggle period. Some important facts support this observation. For example, the number of troops in the Turkish standing army was raised to 78,000 within twenty-eight days of the Battle of Sakarya (August 23–September 13, 1921); that number had been only 23,000 in previous months. Moreover, whereas the number of deserters in the Western Front zone (namely the Aegean region) was 30,809 in June 1921, it was reduced to as low as 4,400 in August of the same year. Eurthermore, between August and September 1921 alone, more than 12,000 deserters were caught in central Anatolia (the zone of the Central Army) and transferred to the Western Front during the National Struggle.⁴³

Hence studying Ottoman desertions in World War I is particularly significant in terms of revealing important continuities in the field of manpower mobilization from the end of the war through the Turkish National Struggle of 1919–22.

NOTES

- 1. Stig Förster, "Introduction," 4.
- 2. See, for example, Stig Förster and Jörg Nagler, eds., On the Road to Total War.
- 3. The total number of men mobilized in the Ottoman Empire during World War I is given with slight variations in various primary and secondary sources. The official Ottoman statistics give the number 2,850,00. Askeri Tarih ve Stratejik Etüt Başkanlığı/Turkish General Staff Military History Archives, Ankara (hereafter ATASE), BDH, Klasör 62, Dosya 309A, Fihrist 005. Ahmed Emin Yalman's *Turkey in the World War*, 252, which was published in 1930, gives a higher number: 2,998,321. Edward J. Erickson's more recent estimate in *Ordered to Die*, 243, is 2,873,000.
- 4. The New Encyclopedia Britannica, 29:987.
- 5. The intended total number of men to be mobilized was 812,663. For an analysis of the Ottoman mobilization in the Balkan Wars, see Mehmet Beşikçi, "Balkan Harbi'nde Osmanlı Seferberliği ve Redif Teşkilatının İflası."
- For a study emphasizing this increased endurance of the Ottoman army in World War I, see Edward J. Erickson, Ottoman Army Effectiveness in World War I.
- 7. See Leonard V. Smith, Between Mutiny and Obedience.
- For a comprehensive analysis of the Ottoman mobilization effort in World War I, see Mehmet Beşikçi, The Ottoman Mobilization of Manpower in the First World War.
- 9. Ottoman-Turkish historiography on World War I, including the official military history of the war published by the Turkish General Staff, has almost always remained silent on this issue and has not produced an in-depth investigation on it. Perhaps the only critical intervention into this silence has come from Erik J. Zürcher, whose pioneering essays have drawn attention to this highly significant issue. See, for example, Erik J. Zürcher, "Between Death and Desertion" and "Refusing to Serve by Other Means."
- 10. ATASE, BDH, Klasör 62, Dosya 309A, Fihrist 005.
- 11. İsmet İnönü, Hatıralar, 126–27.
- 12. Otto Liman von Sanders, Five Years in Turkey, 190.
- 13. Yalman, *Turkey in the World War*, 261–62.
- 14. Erickson, *Ordered to Die*, 243. According to Erickson's estimates, the number of desertions is higher than the number of soldiers who died of disease (466,759) and the number of combat dead and missing (305,085). It is also higher than the total number of Ottoman prisoners of war (around 250,000 according to Yücel Yanıkdağ's estimate). Yücel Yanıkdağ, *Healing the Nation*, 20.

- 15. Zürcher, "Between Death and Desertion," 257. Desertions in the German army proportionally increased in the last year of the war, however, and specific percentages were remarkably high for particular units on certain fronts. For example, the spring offensive of 1918 brought the German soldiers to the limits of their endurance: "Up to 10 percent of men deserted in the preparatory stages en route from the eastern front." David Englander, "Mutinies and Military Morale," 198.
- Statistics of the Military Effort of the British Empire during the Great War (1914– 1920), 741.
- 17. The Russian case was much lower in terms of proportion, considering that 14.4 million Russians were called to service from 1914 to 1916. Mark von Hagen, "The First World War, 1914–1918," 96–97. According to another source, the total number of Russian desertions increased considerably in 1917 and reached as high as 2,000,000: Nicholas N. Golovine, *The Russian Army in the World War*, 121, 125.
- 18. Holger H. Herwig, "The German Victories, 1917–1918," 258.
- A British military intelligence report claimed as early as July 1915 that the number of deserters from the Ottoman army was up to 20 percent of the total troops. Great Britain, National Archives (formerly the Public Record Office), London (hereafter NA/PRO), WO 157/693, July 1915.
- 20. Von Sanders, Five Years in Turkey, 50.
- 21. Joseph Pomianowski, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Çöküşü, 201.
- Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi/Prime Ministry Ottoman Archive in Istanbul (hereafter BOA), DH.EUM.KLU., 15/37.
- 23. TNA/PRO WO 106/63.
- 24. The telegram is dated June 20, 1918. Von Sanders, Five Years in Turkey, 243.
- 25. Stanford J. Shaw, Ottoman Empire in World War I, 1:93–105.
- 26. This tendency was not entirely new. The experience of the Balkan defeat, during which a considerable number of Ottoman non-Muslims (especially Ottoman Greeks and Bulgarians) deserted to their ethnic armies, must have contributed to this distrust. Fikret Adanır, "Non-Muslims in the Ottoman Army and the Ottoman Defeat in the Balkan War of 1912–1913," 113–25.
- 27. Haris Spataris, "Biz İstanbullular Böyleyiz," 148.
- 28. See, for example, Alexander Aaronsohn, *Türk Ordusuyla Filistin'de* 45. Feigning illness and malingering were also common among Muslim enlisted men. See, for example, Metin Özata, *Bir Doktorun Harp ve Memleket Anıları (Dr. Mehmet Derviş Kuntman)*, 72–73.
- See, for example, BOA, DH.EUM.KLH., 5/56, December 22, 1915. The issue of frequent Arab desertions is also commonly mentioned in the memoirs of German officers who served in the Ottoman Empire. See, for example, Hans Guhr, Anadolu'dan Filistin'e Türklerle Omuz Omuza, 144, 211.
- 30. Hüseyin Hüsnü Emir Erkilet, *Yıldırım*, 346; also cited in Erickson, *Ottoman Army Effectiveness*, 129.
- 31. It should be remembered, however, that no consensus exists on the demographic statistics of the non-Muslim groups in the late Ottoman Empire. Moreover, depending on the infrastructural development level, the Ottoman conscription system worked better in some regions than in others, regardless of the demographic characteristic of those regions. For more details on the demographic statistical

- data, see Kemal H. Karpat, Ottoman Population (1830–1914), 188–89; Vedat Eldem, Harp ve Mütareke Yıllarında Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Ekonomisi, 4.
- 32. BOA, DH.EUM.6.ŞB., 9/8, September 6, 1916. The Province of Aydın included at this time the subprovinces of İzmir (center of the province), Aydın, Denizli, and Saruhan (Manisa).
- 33. For various examples of such reports, see ATASE, BDH, 2322/71/1-1; ATASE, BDH, 2322/71/1-7. For some examples from the British intelligence, see TNA/PRO WO 157/703, March–April 1916; TNA/PRO WO 157/800, June 1917; TNA/PRO WO 157-727, May 1918.
- 34. BOA, DH.ŞFR., 88/3, June 1, 1918.
- 35. BOA, DH.ŞFR., 79/17, August 2, 1917.
- 36. Zürcher says that local people often sympathized with deserters, which is one of the main aspects that differentiate the Ottoman case from Western European countries. Zürcher, "Refusing to Serve by Other Means," 50.
- 37. See, for example, ATASE, BDH, 2880/323/3. Report sent from the commander of the 37th Caucasus Division to the 2nd Caucasus Corps on June 20, 1917.
- 38. This was also observed as early as May 1916 by the Dutch embassy, which reported that "the army has replaced prison sentences with corporal punishment in the field in order not to deplete the strength of the army further." Erik J. Zürcher, "Little Mehmet in the Desert," 234.
- For the texts of these amnesties, respectively, see Düstûr (Ottoman Statute Book), series II, vol. 6, p. 981; Düstûr, series II, vol. 7, pp. 630; Düstûr, series II, vol. 10, p. 553.
- 40. BOA, DH.UMVM., 124/182, September 21, 1918.
- 41. ATASE, BDH, 62/309A/005.
- 42. Ergün Aybars, İstiklal Mahkemeleri, 33, 147.
- 43. Mustafa Balcıoğlu, Belgelerle Milli Mücadele Sırasında Anadolu'da Ayaklanmalar ve Merkez Ordusu, 204.

The Military Origins of the Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa

The IMRO and the Ottoman Special Forces on the Eve of World War I

Tetsuya Sahara

The period between the Balkan Wars (1912–13) and World War I was the major turning point in the modern history of southeastern Europe. It laid the basis for the contemporary interstate system in the peninsula as well as the mutual relations among the Balkan nations. As the region adopted a new denomination, "the Balkans," instead of its old epithet, "European Turkey," the age-old epic of enslaved Christians fighting against "Asian savagery" for liberation was modified into a new story of fratricidal "Balkan barbarians." A fantasy known as Balkanization also developed, indicating a place where small nations with mutual hatred are constantly quarreling with each other.

The new notion first appeared in the Western media as a convenient tool to safeguard "civilized Europe" by distancing Balkan Christians from it. The change in the European image of the Balkans affected indigenous peoples as well. In the hope of being considered a "civilized" nation, each Balkan people dissociated from its neighbors and attributed disgraceful attributes to them. As a result a specific form of Balkan identity was created: We are a special nation, cultivated, sincere, polite, and without anything in common with our barbarian neighbors. In the process history writing played a significant role. Historians made an effort to find every subtle testimony that could fit into their self-flattering paradigm and took pains to eliminate and conceal the traces that might be considered disgraceful to their nation. Consequently each nation has quite different views of its neighbors.

It is natural that the historical self-justification most strongly affected the narratives on the period between the Balkan Wars and World War I, as the starting point for modern Balkan myths. This is especially true for Turkish-Bulgarian relations. Turks would recall the war with a stereotype that they were one-sidedly persecuted by Bulgarians, while Bulgarians view it as the last episode of five hundred years of Turkish "barbarism." Anyone who looks back at the real course of events during the period, however, realizes that both views are oversimplified, if not false. The facts were much more complicated and paradoxical. This chapter gives a new picture by highlighting an unknown story of the love-hate relationship between Bulgarian and Turkish revolutionaries on the eve of World War I.

THE FIRST PHASE: PERSECUTION AND RESISTANCE

The breakdown of the centuries-long coexistence of Bulgarians and Turks in the southern Balkans came suddenly in the fall of 1912. As Ottoman citizens, both groups had been liable to conscription and expected to fight together against the empire's enemies. When a war between Ottomans and the Balkan League became imminent, some Bulgarians deserted from military service. Others defected into the mountains, subsequently joining guerrilla bands organized by nationalist groups. They hid in hills and valleys until Allied forces crossed the border. During the early days of October, when the Ottoman army faced its catastrophic defeat, these bands formed by former peasant guerrillas began to intrude into villages and towns, carrying out massacres and plundering the Turkish population.

The Bulgarian government propagated the idea that the guerrillas were a natural and inevitable reaction to the centuries-old oppression inflicted by Turks. Contrary to this widely accepted view, guerrilla atrocities were in fact part and parcel of a well-prepared strategy of the Bulgarian Army. Bulgarian authorities had long since drawn up a plan to mobilize Christian guerrillas in the Ottoman territory. For this purpose Bulgarian authorities gave support to VMORO (Vatreshnata Makedono-Odrinska Revolutisonna Organizatsiya: Internal Macedonian Adrianople Revolutionary Organization) and provided it with money and weapons. Originally an independent terrorist organization with a characteristic of mass movement, VMORO had greatly lost its influence over the Ottoman Bulgarians by 1910. The abortive Ilinden Uprising had the main effect of weakening the organization. Many of the

voevodes (guerrilla commanders) and militants were forced into exile, while potential supporters, the Ottoman Bulgarian peasants, were massively persecuted and fled into Bulgaria. A series of internal conflicts, especially the rift between the leftists and rightists after the Young Turk Revolution, pushed the organization to the brink of total destruction. But the trend was reversed after 1910.²

In the hope of preparing the ground for military intervention in Macedonia, the Bulgarian government gave support to terrorist circles. The terrorists were entrusted with the mission to create disturbance, using quite nasty tactics. First, they massacred Turkish and other people by planting bombs and explosives in public places and mosques, expecting that the enraged Muslims would retaliate against Christians. From 1910 to 1912 they carried out dozens of assaults, known as "donkey attempts." Terrorists left donkeys carrying sacks with time bombs in market places. The explosion inflicted heavy casualties on the civil population. The Ottoman authorities usually took precautions to contain Muslim retaliation, but in some cases the indignation was too great to control. One such event took place in a mosque in Shtip (Štip) on November 21, 1911. In retaliation the Muslim population carried out a massacre, killing 23 Christians and injuring 423.3 The bloody incident in Kochani (August 1, 1912) had more serious consequences. Together with garrison soldiers, irritated Muslims carried out an attack on Christians in the marketplace. It caused hundreds of casualties. At the end of August, again on market day, a bomb was exploded in Doyran, killing thirteen and injuring forty-five, most of them Muslims.4

Thanks to the renewed terrorist activities VMORO regained its vitality under the leadership of Todor Alexandrov, Hristo Chernopeev, Petar Chaulev, and Aleksandar Protogerov. The organization grew still more formidable when the Balkan Wars broke out. As the war became imminent, the chief of the General Staff, Ivan Fichev, entrusted Protogerov with the work of organizing guerrilla formations to use as shock troops. On September 18 Protogerov summoned VMORO veterans in the name of the "liberation committee of Macedonian Adrianople Revolutionary Organization." Immediately after the meeting dozens of bands were created. By the time war was declared a total of fifty-two bands had been set up. An additional thirty-four bands were already operating in Macedonia. In all 2,174 soldiers were enrolled either in the bands created by the partisan detachment staff or in those that already existed in Macedonia. After dispatching the guerrilla bands, Protogerov created a volunteer

formation known as the Macedonian-Adrianople Volunteers (MAV). MAV had 18,870 forces, undoubtedly the largest foreign legion that operated during the Balkan Wars. Albeit officially proclaimed as a unit for foreign volunteers, it was nothing but a military section of VMORO. The overwhelming majority of its members were Macedonian refugees in Bulgaria, well-organized under VMORO leadership. With the creation of MAV, VMORO succeeded in possessing its own army. MAV brigades were dispatched to the eastern front on October 30. The following month they operated in Rhodope and Thrace. MAV fought bravely against regular formations of the Ottoman Army and contributed to victories of Bulgaria. At the same time, however, MAV, together with VMORO partisan bands, was used as a tool to intimidate civilian Turks.

The scale of destruction and persecution inflicted on Muslim communities by Bulgarians was enormous. When Rhodope and Western Thrace came under Bulgarian rule in 1913, Muslim villages were widely destroyed. In his report on March 23, 1913, N. Saev, the deputy bishop of Razlog, confessed that the scale of massacre was too large to give even a rough estimate of the number of survivors. The advancing Bulgarian army destroyed seven villages with 1,100 houses in Ahi-Chelebi and ten villages with 300 houses in Dedeağaç. One of the most devastated areas was the Devlen district. The thirty-three prewar Muslim villages with 3,970 houses were entirely or partly burned down by the Bulgarian Army in the early days of the war. The ostensible reason for this unprecedented exterminatory operation was that a handful of Tamrash villages showed signs of resistance. Taking this as a pretext, the 21st Infantry Regiment, 9th Provdiv Regiment, and 1st Brigade of the 2nd Army harshly suppressed the resistance and perpetrated atrocities. The moving force, however, was a unit of volunteers from Batak.6

The oppression continued even after the military activities finished. When the occupation began, Bulgarians could not station enough troops in Rhodope to maintain order and security. Its main forces were engaged either in the siege of Edirne fortress or in the defense of positions in Çatalca and Macedonia. Muslim communities, who were deprived of adult male members owing to massacre, deportation, and banishment, became easy targets of Christian bandits. In addition to the exposure to Christian robberies Muslims faced more serious and systematic persecution. By the end of 1912 Bulgarian authorities were ready to launch a forced Christianization campaign against Muslims in Rhodope and Western Thrace.⁷ The campaign, ostensibly led by chaplains and local

clergies, was actively supported by VMORO guerrillas. The conversion was carried out with extraordinary violence. Those who showed the slightest sign of reluctance were tortured, even to death.⁸

The systematic persecution naturally precipitated resistance. In the early days most of the resistance took somewhat passive forms, including the use of Muslim names instead of newly given Christian ones in private spaces, reluctance to go to churches, a boycott of Christian schools, and secret attendance at Islamic rituals.

When the Second Balkan War started, the resistance grew much more formidable. Bulgaria was forced to fight with all its neighboring states. Taking advantage of the plight of Bulgarians, Muslim communities in Rhodope and Western Thrace joined the uprising. On June 30, 1913, a company of the 1st Infantry Regiment sent against Greeks came upon Muslim insurgents in Nevrokop. In the ensuing fighting Bulgarians destroyed four villages. In late August and early September a new revolt broke out near Devlen, in which many Muslim villagers in west and central Rhodope participated. Military and administrative officers were forced to take shelter in Dospat, and a local priest and his secretary were killed. The fighting at Palace (Rudozem) and Smolyan was so fierce that one soldier and two policemen were killed. To crush the uprising Bulgarians had to dispatch the 39th Infantry Regiment on September 2. Ten days later the regiment commander, Major Krastev, reported that the uprising had been crushed and villages had been turned into ashes. Indeed eight villages were totally burned down, and only 30 out of 250 houses remained intact in Devlen. In spite of the harsh measures, however, Bulgarians could not contain the resistance. The 37th Infantry Regiment and the Skechenskiyat squad were dispatched as reinforcements.9 A large uprising broke out in western Rhodope, where baptized Muslims, together with those who were unbaptized, took up arms in nearby villages of Nevrokop. The uprising was so massive that the garrison commander could not dispatch a detachment for fear that division of forces would endanger the fortress. Signs of unrest quickly spread over the adjacent districts. 10 In Ksanthi district a group of Muslim guerrillas fought for reconversion. They drove out Bulgarian priests from Muslim villages and neutralized Christian bandits. Another band led by Fehmi Bey was formed to fight against Christianization in Maden. It was active in the villages of central Rhodope and helped people return to Islam. In April Turks formed a volunteer detachment in Kardjali (Kırcaali) as a sign of protest against the execution of two local notables. This group was active in eastern Rhodope and came as far as Daridere to help Muslims fight against forced Christianization.11

In the midst of this situation the Ottomans canceled the armistice with Bulgaria and invaded Eastern Thrace. The cabinet of Said Halim Paşa was reluctant to enter into the war, as it feared eventual intervention by the Great Powers. Enver Bey, however, asserted that the Ottomans should recapture Adrianople. A number of young army officers known as fedais supported the proposal and pressured the government to reopen the war. Enver gave orders for his troops to embark on a general offensive on July 13. The Ottomans swiftly recaptured Eastern Thrace and liberated Adrianople on July 23. The Ottomans swiftly recaptured Eastern Thrace and liberated Adrianople on July 23.

This event greatly irritated the Great Powers, so the Ottomans tried to appease them by announcing that they would not cross the Maritsa River on July 19. ¹⁴ The young CUP officers were dissatisfied with this decision. They hoped to recapture all of Thrace and insisted on launching a new military operation. Thus Enver decided to continue military operations, using troops disguised as volunteer units. He gave a confidential order to Kuşçubaşı Eşref to lead a small volunteer unit into Western Thrace. He captured Ortaköy on August 15 and went as far as Koşkavak, where he chased out Bulgarian guerrillas. The Turkish "volunteer" unit entered Mestanlı on August 18 and Kırcaali the following day. ¹⁵ After their initial success Enver and Eşref met at Ortaköy on August 19 and decided to recapture the rest of Western Thrace. Additional fedai officers, led by Süleyman Askeri, joined in the mission. Fedai officers captured Gümülcine (Dimotika) on August 31 and İskeçe (Ksanthi) on September 1, placing Western Thrace under their de facto control.

Turkish historiography usually describes this process as a temporarily successful military adventure of Enver and has not paid enough attention to the resistance movement of local Muslims. Without the support of the population, however, it would have been impossible for a small number of "deserted" officers to control all of Western Thrace. Behind the success of the CUP officers was tremendous support from the local Muslims. For example, when he entered Koşkavak, Eşref organized a battalion of local Muslims and provided them with 1,200 rifles confiscated from Bulgarian guerrillas. At the same time he created a provisional government of Koşkavak, appointing Kamber Ağa, a local leader, as its head. He did the same in Mestanlı and Kırcaali. 16 In the same vein Süleyman Askeri summoned local Muslim representatives soon after the capture of Gümülcine and declared the creation of the "provisional government of Western Thrace." A local madrasa teacher, Salih Hoca, was elected president, and former Ottoman local officers joined the cabinet. 17 The Ottoman administrative divisions called kazas were revived, and each of them was to be governed by its own local government.¹⁸

THE SECOND PHASE: BULGARIAN-OTTOMAN RAPPROCHEMENT

The Turkish counteroffensive resulted in a huge humanitarian catastrophe among Bulgarians in Thrace. Bulgarians were uprooted from many towns and villages, causing both territorial and psychological loss. ¹⁹ The events might have opened the door for Bulgarians to intensify their hatred toward the Turks, but the consequence turned out to be quite different.

The creation of the Gümülcine Republic caused serious anxiety for Bulgarians. If the unrest in Western Thrace had lasted for some time, Greece might have intervened, leading to a perpetual loss of Mediterranean access. Therefore Bulgarians wanted the quickest possible solution to the issue. The predicament was solved by an unexpected show of goodwill from the Turks. They conceded Western Thrace as "baksheesh to the brave Bulgarian army." ²⁰

A Bulgarian agent, Grigor Nachovich, made overtures and succeeded in getting a positive answer on August 17. The official Bulgarian delegation, led by General Mihail Savov, arrived in Istanbul on September 2. The conference lasted more than twenty days, and the Istanbul Peace Treaty was signed on September 29. The treaty was a significant diplomatic victory for the Ottomans. Bulgaria was forced to abandon its claim to Adrianople and agreed on the Maritsa River as a new border instead of the Midiye-Enez line. Moreover, it gave significant concessions to the Muslim population. Those who wanted to keep Ottoman citizenship got four years of moratorium and were guaranteed that they could retain their property. Those who were to be left behind the Bulgarian border were given amnesty and an exemption of tax and military service for four years. In addition, administrative and political autonomy were granted to the Muslim community.²²

Enver explained the reasons for the Bulgarian concession in the following way: "Forcefully Christianized people took up arms. The insurrections brought our enemy Bulgarians to Istanbul for peace talks." Cemal Paşa, likewise, praised the effects of the Muslim resistance in Western Thrace. "This West-Thrace enterprise... brought us substantial political advantages at the Constantinople Conference later on, and subsequently when the basis in the Ottoman–Bulgarian alliance was being discussed." The armed Thracian Muslim resistance fighters, however, were not as opportunistic as CUP politicians. They were greatly disappointed by the Ottoman decision to abandon the Thracian cause. The fedai officers showed sympathy for the population. Many of them wanted

to remain in the territory and began to prepare armed resistance against the Bulgarian occupation. Their frustration with the Istanbul government was too enormous to control. Upon the request of Süleyman Askeri, the government sent Cemal to Western Thrace with a special mission to persuade the officers. Cemal succeeded in appeasing them by dynamically negotiating with Bulgarian occupation forces.²⁵

The Bulgarian authorities were careful to appease the Muslim population too. On October 16 the Bulgarian army officially announced a general amnesty and guarantee of constitutional rights, irrespective of faith or nationality. Muslim residents received assurances that the civil and military authorities would honor their faith and ethnicity and protect their life and property. Moreover, Bulgarians pledged to appoint an ethnic Bulgarian Turk as mayor of Gümülcine. Even though the policy could not immediately eliminate hostilities, the disturbances that followed were by and large limited to small skirmishes with local or personal characteristics.²⁶

If the evacuation of Western Thrace was the first step for the Ottoman–Bulgarian rapprochement on the eve of World War I, the second step was a proposal for military cooperation. According to Cemal, the proposal was first made by the head of the Bulgarian delegation, Gen. Mihail Savov, at the third session of the peace talks (September 15).²⁷ But the proposal was a ruse. The offer was a device to contain the territorial loss to the minimum. The Bulgarian government at this moment did not feel any necessity to conclude a military alliance with the Ottomans.²⁸ The idea of military cooperation originated with VMORO, which had already started an overture to the CUP by the time of Savov's proposal. It seems plausible that the Bulgarian delegation made use of the process established by VMORO, independently from the official peace talk.²⁹

When Bulgaria lost the Second Balkan War, it had two alternatives for its future diplomatic orientation. One was Balkan cooperation; the other was the continuing struggle for "national unification." If we consider the serious damage and war devastation that Bulgaria suffered as well as its extremely isolated situation in international relations, the first option was much more realistic. But it meant a permanent relinquishment of Macedonia. As a champion of national unification, VMORO by no means accepted the option. Therefore, it considered it imperative to frustrate the first option, making use of every possible means. On August 11, 1913, the day after the conclusion of the Bucharest treaty, the central committee of VMORO adopted a resolution to carry out a diplomatic and military struggle for revision of the treaty. In the following days the

committee instructed its voevodes to make preparation for renewed battle against the Serbian and Greek "enslavers" in Macedonia.³⁰ To accomplish the mission, the committee deemed it necessary to attract local Muslims to its side.

The idea of Bulgarian-Muslim cooperation was not original with VMRO. As early as April 1913 the representative of the provisional Albanian government proposed a joint uprising with VMORO. The plan was abortive: the Bulgarian government frustrated it. But when the Second Balkan War was foreseen, Bulgarians changed their mind and made overtures of joint struggle. This plan bore fruit in August. A concerted action was accepted by VMORO and Albanian revolutionaries. They staged a general uprising in Western Macedonia, which broke out on September 7, 1913. The Bulgarian and Muslim guerrillas succeeded in mobilizing massive support among the population and occupied several important cities like Ohrid, Debar, and Struga. This success impressed the VMORO leadership with the importance to cooperate with Muslims. The key for the further development lay in the support of the Ottoman government.

The VMORO leadership conceived the idea of military cooperation with Ottomans as early as the beginning of August 1913. After the conference of August 2 Aleksandar Protogerov and Todor Aleksandrov tried to persuade Anton Dimitrov, a former Ottoman judge who had strong connection with the CUP leaders. They revealed a plan to conclude an agreement with CUP on "Macedonian autonomy." Dimitrov accepted the offer and made contact with Talat Bey on September 15. When Talat reacted positively, the central committee of VMORO dispatched its delegation (Boris Minchev and Dionisiy Kandilarov) to Istanbul.³² The first meeting took place on October 12, under the presidency of Talat Bey. At the meeting they discussed the future borders and type of government under which Macedonia would be ruled. Cemal presided over the next day's meeting, and an agreement was made on the future relations between Turks and Bulgarians in Macedonia as well as on staging uprisings in Ohrid, Debar, Kichevo, and Tikva against the Serbian regime. After Aleksandar Protogerov arrived (October 18), the negotiation gathered momentum. The two delegations signed a common protocol on October 30 that regulated the joint guerrilla activities in Macedonia and declared that Turkish and Bulgarian-Macedonian committees were ready to resort to all legal and illegal means to work together for the sake of "Macedonian autonomy." To supervise the coordination of military activities, a joint foreign agency was to be established in Istanbul.33

The first meeting of the foreign agency took place on November 17, 1913, in Istanbul. The meeting was presided over by Cemal. Four members participated. The Turkish delegates were Dr. Nazım and Atif, while the Bulgarian delegates were Aleksandar Protogerov and Georgi Nikolov. The next day Süleyman Askeri presented a written draft of general activities. It prescribed that the organization would be based on military principle, with all committees and voevodes being appointed from the top. 34

The existing Turkish sources give a slightly different explanation for the rapprochement between VMORO and the CUP. Fuat Balkan, a member of the Bulgarian-Turkish guerrilla band, asserts in his memoirs that VMORO first made contact with Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk). According to his allegation, Dimitar Achkov made the following proposal: "To forget the calamities that took place during the Balkan Wars, to counteract the komitadji organizations of Serbian Black Hand and Greek Ethniki Hetaireia by setting up a Bulgarian-Turkish joint organization, to make sure of the support of Turks in Serbia and Greece [for the activities]." The proposal was accepted by the defense minister, Enver, and a secret negotiation began. The Bulgarian envoy was composed of Pavli Şatev, Dr. Georgi Nikolof, and Colonel Jekov. The Turkish side was represented by Süleyman Askeri, Seyfi Bey, Aziz Akyürek, Behaettin Şakir, Mithat Şükrü, and Küçük Talat Bey. Both sides agreed on the following points: "By collaborating with the Bulgarian Macedonia Committee, we, Turks, will support the Bulgarian claims and aspirations against Serbs and Greeks. The Bulgarian side will back up the Turkish wish and aspirations and if the Kavala district between the Mesta and the Struma Rivers is to be liberated from Greek rule, Bulgarians will cede Western Thrace between the Maritsa and the Mesta Rivers to Turkey." The agreement was approved by the CUP leadership, and Süleyman Askeri was appointed as the head of the newly established Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa.³⁵

Fuat Balkan's evidence corresponds in general with the Bulgarian sources, but several details are incompatible with other sources. First, the mediation of Mustafa Kemal was impossible. He came to Sofia as a military attaché on October 23, 1913, so it was impossible for him to mediate in the CUP-VMRO talks. Moreover, the reports prepared by Kemal while in office contain no trace of mediation. Second, Fuat Balkan named Colonel Jekov instead of Protogerov as a member of the Bulgarian delegation. He seems to have confused the CUP-VMORO meeting with the Ottoman–Bulgarian alliance talks. Third, Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa was officially founded on August 5, 1914.

As for the meeting of Süleyman Askeri and Aleksandar Protogerov, Celal Perin gives the following, more accurate story in his memoirs: Bulgarians invited Süleyman Askeri to a meeting with the head of the Macedonian committee, retired General Protogerov, and the deputy head, Todor Alexandrov, with the help of Dr. Nikolov, who worked at the Bulgarian hospital in Istanbul. After a long discussion, Süleyman Askeri and the Bulgarian Macedonian committee reached an agreement that satisfied both of them.... The two committees were to cooperate in organizing guerrilla bands against Serbs for the liberation of Turks and Bulgarians that had been enslaved by Serbs. If Bulgaria enters the war against Serbia in future, collaboration should be more active. Strumica will be the common base of guerrilla operations.³⁶

This confirms the account regarding the Istanbul meeting in early November given earlier.

In conclusion it is safe to assume that VMORO and the CUP had agreed on the joint guerrilla activities against Serbia by November 1913. Based on the well-arranged plan, both sides started the preparation of guerrilla warfare. The agreement marked an important turning point for both the Macedonian revolutionaries and the CUP fedais. The Macedonians drastically changed their strategic plans. Now their field of activities was exclusively concentrated in Vardar and Aegean Macedonia, and Thrace ceased to be their target. Early in 1914 the organization adopted a new regulation by which one of its adjectives, "Adrianople," was dropped. It must be noted that the change of trademark was requested by a CUP leader, Cemal Bey.³⁷ The new name, VMRO, symbolizes that the Bulgarian nationalists gave up their claims to the part of Thrace under the Ottoman rule. For the Ottomans the military preparation became the basis for the future secret service, Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa. Although the initial negotiation was conducted by Cemal Bey, the implementation of the agreement was entrusted to the officer group organized and supported by Enver Bey. Enver, hitherto unseen in the CUP-VMRO talks, suddenly appeared on the main stage of the military preparation and began to control the process through his right-hand man, Süleyman Askeri.

THIRD PHASE: PREPARATIONS FOR JOINT ACTIVITIES

On November 19, 1913, Süleyman Askeri was ordered to head for Gümülcine to organize a local committee.³⁸ Nurettin Şimşek, a biographer of Süleyman, believes that during this mission he founded the Türk Batı Trakya Komitesi (Turkish Western Thrace Committee). The committee

was directly supervised by Süleyman and composed of two branches. The first branch was to operate in Serbian territory. The commander, Capt. Çolak İbrahim, was to collaborate with Petar Chaulev, his Bulgarian counterpart. Fuat Balkan led the other branch to fight against Greeks in collaboration with Pavel Shestakov. According to the committee's official instructions, the goal was to achieve Macedonian autonomy by securing local Muslim support for Bulgarian activities. The real objective, however, was to organize the Muslim population both inside and outside Bulgaria and make use of the Muslims for the sake of the Ottoman Empire.³⁹

In this regard it is important to consider the situation in Western Thrace. According to the Istanbul Treaty, Muslims were obliged to deliver weapons to the Bulgarian authorities. But in reality the collected arms and munitions were kept in the depots of municipal governments by and large controlled by local Muslims. Petar Chaulev ascertained in his report that the weapons were used for organizing and sending Muslim guerrillas to Macedonia. Accompanied by Süleyman Askeri, Chaulev made an inspection trip to Western Thrace in February 1914. During the tour he noticed that the Muslim community in the Gümülcine district was organized as if they had been "one man." Every town had its own club office called the "committee house," where Muslims held meetings or read newspapers. The club had the air of a city hall for Muslims. Orders and dispatches from the Bulgarian authorities were first read there, and all lawsuits among Muslims were heard there.

The community was organized militarily as well. The Muslim population was "armed from head to toe" and organized into battalions, companies, and regiments. Upon his arrival and departure, Chaulev was greeted with semimilitary parades led by officers in their civilian clothes. Officers were incorporated into a disciplined command line. General commander Süleyman Askeri had two aides, Reşad Bey and Said Arif Bey. Local commandants were Cemal Fanzi Bey in İskençe, Sadık Emin Bey in Gümülcine, Rıza Bey in Dedeağaç, and Cemal Bey in Soflu. The majority of the officers were not of local origin. They were sent there by order of the Ottoman army, after their demobilization. The organization had its own commissary, military doctors, and agitators. According to Chaulev's report, the military structure that had been introduced during the Gümülcine Republic remained intact and continued to serve for the new purpose: to fight against Serbs and Greeks.

The first joint military operations began in early 1914. Five small bands led by Akif Bey, Mehmed Ali Bey, Çerkez Ali Bey, and Hüseyin Kapitan arrived in Macedonia and began to stir up the Muslim population

in Kilkis, Drama, Doyran, Radovishte, and Shtip. The headquarters of the Turkish bands in Strumitsa was supervised by Çolak İbrahim. 42

As for the strategic effects of the joint activities, Bulgarians and Turks presented different views. Bulgarians claimed that the Turkish bands did not contribute much to VMORO's military efforts. ⁴³ But Turks asserted that they were the moving force behind the Bulgarian entry into World War I. Both of them were a long way off the mark, however, because the guerrilla activities had several phases of intensification. During 1914 the Muslim komitadjis played prominent roles in agitation and sabotage in the Serbian territory. For example, the band of Mehmed Ali, composed of eighteen fighters, raided into Serbian territory and conducted a 24-hour battle with the Serb army. Another band, led by Yahya Kapitan, defeated Serb guerrillas, killing their leader, Babunski. ⁴⁴

As for Yahya's band, Mustafa Kemal sent a telegram to "Askeri Bey" of the War Ministry on August 28, 1914: "Protogerov and Dr. Nikolov requested of me that Yahya's band should be dispatched within three days. At the same time, they asked not to send the others except for Eyüp Sabri Bey and his friends before getting information here." This message indicates that the Muslim komitadjis were operating under the direction of Süleyman Askeri and in collaboration with VMORO. Although the telegram may suggest the involvement of Mustafa Kemal in the intrigue, other sources contradict this assumption. Hüsamettin Ertürk, the last director of Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa, recollected how the dispatch of Çolak İbrahim and his fellow fighters to Sofia embarrassed Mustafa Kemal and Fethi (Okyar), Turkish ambassador to Sofia.

Mustafa Kemal was especially concerned about eventual reprisal against the civil Muslim population by Serbs. His uneasiness was not baseless. In response to the sabotage of Muslim komitadjis Serbs began persecuting Macedonian Muslims. As a result more than eight hundred refugees sought shelter at Strumitsa during November 1914. A large number of displaced Muslims were starving in the field, as Bulgarian border guards prevented them from entering into their territory. In due course guerrilla leaders appealed to the Turkish embassy for help. Kemal asked the general staff to send provisions for the refugees. Tenver, however, replied in the following way: "The activities of Turkish special forces in the Serbian territory have had expected results to a certain extent. In light of the current situation, and in order to achieve our final objectives, the forces must intensify their joint activities with Bulgarians." As this communication shows, the terrorist activities were planned and promoted at the initiative of Enver and conducted through Süleyman Askeri and his

comrades. Mustafa Kemal and the Turkish embassy played only auxiliary roles in this system.

In contrast to the aggressive activities of Muslim guerrillas, the operations of Bulgarian komitadjis remained passive until the middle of 1914. They were not allowed to conduct any large-scale assaults and were restricted to minor activities by their government. Before the outbreak of World War I the Bulgarian government of Vasil Radoslavov was reluctant to give VMORO a free hand, fearing that this might put Bulgaria in a difficult position with regard to the Entente states. Therefore it reinforced its border guards and prevented guerrillas from freely raiding Macedonia. Even after the outbreak of the war Radoslavov pursued a two-track policy between the Axis and the Entente for some time. It made him more watchful of VMORO guerrillas. Furthermore, VMORO was indecisive about full cooperation with the Muslim komitadjis. Many voevodes were suspicious of Muslim terrorists and still felt sympathy toward their traditional ally, Russia. The suspicious of Muslim terrorists and still felt sympathy toward their traditional ally, Russia.

THE FINAL PHASE: THE VALANDOVO AFFAIR

During June 1914 the central committee of VMORO finally decided to embark on guerrilla activities. The first serious attempt was the bombardment of a railway bridge over the Vodosir River between Udovo and Demirkapiya in early July. On 16 August another attempt was made against the railway line between Gevgeliya and Veles, which destroyed a Serbian freight train. During the following months guerrillas carried out a number of skirmishes with the Serbian border guards. 52 On the night of September 10-11, 1914, guerrillas made an abortive attack on a bridge, followed by raids on the neighboring village, Mirovče. The first large-scale operation conducted by Muslim komitadjis and VMORO was an attempt on two railway bridges over the Vardar River near the village of Udovo on November 15, 1914. The Serbian guard was almost completely destroyed by the attack, and the guerrillas inflicted huge damage on the bridges. According to the original plan, a Muslim-Bulgarian detachment of 120-150 troops would implement this action. The Bulgarian effort was to be led by either Todor Alexandrov or Aleksandar Protogerov. Hakkı Efendi and Hüseyin Bey would command the Muslim komitadjis.⁵³ A Serbian source claims that the rebels were led by Bulgarian voevodes, Koljo Levterov and Dimitrije Nedkov, and speculates the Bulgarian government backed the raid. The same source, however, notes that the intruders were equipped with brand-new machine-guns hitherto unknown. If we consider that Sofia was reluctant to give full support to VMORO at the time, the weapons were probably provided by the Ottoman side.⁵⁴

After the event the joint activities gathered momentum. The Serbian authorities began to be swamped by frequent challenges of komitadjis and gradually lost control over the countryside.⁵⁵ According to the Serbian records, 180 incidents were provoked by Bulgarian guerrillas from July 4, 1914, to June 20, 1915. The central committee of VMORO admitted that its units engaged in a total of 263 battles with Serbian and Greek forces between December 1912 and September 1915. 57 In his report to Serbian Defense Ministry, Damjan Popović, the commander of New Province's troop, described the situation of Vardar Macedonia. During January and early February the Serb authorities detected many guerrilla bands prowling in the countryside. They appeared in unexpected places and at unexpected moments. As soon as the patrols noticed them, they would escape. While six Bulgarian and four Turkish guerrilla bands were operating in the region under his jurisdiction, the guerrillas in the Tikveš region were all Turks. East of Vardar, in Negotin and Radovishte districts, was another Turkish band, led by "Jaja-aga." "Haki-bey" led his band in the Juruk region. In March Serbs noticed a total of 160 Bulgarian guerrillas active in Vardar Macedonia, led by the voevodes "Jovan Brlo, Milan Ćurlukov, and Pančo Krivopalančanin."58

The komitadjis stirred up unrest and successfully instigated Muslim populations to boycott military services as well. On January 14, 1915, the commander of the Serbian 12th Border Guard Platoon sent the following report: "Muslims are evading military service in a large scale, especially in villages on the left bank of the Vardar River in the Negotin district." Ten days later the governor of Tikvesh prefecture likewise complained: "At the time of recruiting, a total of 200 military-age Muslims in our prefecture deserted, 79 from Negotin district, 65 from Dojran, and 56 from Gevgelja. In addition, a large number of their relatives went into exile with them."

Along with the propaganda activities the komitadjis began to prepare another attack on Serbian military institutions. On January 16 the magistrate of Gevgerilja reported: "Turks in our territory secretly got information that Bulgarians, together with them, would attack us from Drama, Albania, and Strumitsa." Indeed the guerrillas began to rally at their bases around Strumitsa during spring 1915. According to an intelligence report from the New Province's troop (March 22), approximately 300 Turkish and 40 Bulgarian guerrillas were gathering in Strumitsa

town. In addition 795 fighters were staying in the nearby sixteen villages. The general commander of the guerrillas was "Haki-bey," supported by a Bulgarian major, "Čepeškov," as a treasurer. Serbs identified ten officers by name: "Ovčarov, Abdija, Stamen, Odža Štipski, Adem Čauš, Belča, Andranac, Tvaki-Bey, Gave Stojanov, and Laptarov." The number and names of other officers were unknown. These guerrilla bands were well armed, with plenty of supplies. The members were recruited from former komitadjis, refugees from Serbian territory, and veteran volunteers of the Serbian-Turkish War.⁶⁰

On April 2–3, 1915, VMRO and Muslim komitadjis conducted their largest joint military operation on railway bridges near Valandovo. The Serbian intelligence noticed a group of officers arrived at Strumitsa by cars from Melnik and Petrič on April 1. It identified three Bulgarian officers (Capt. Tomo Ikonomov, Lt. Aleksandar Kozakov, and Lieutenant Nikolov), five Turkish (Capt. Hüseyin Efendi, İbrahim Efendi, Mehmed Ali Bey, Lt. Nuri Efendi, and Ömer Efendi), and five Bulgarian voevodes (Ičko, Stojče, Sermeninac, Donče, and Argir). The same day they moved to a strategically important village, Čepeli, near the border, and put the guerrillas in the surrounding regions under their command.⁶¹

The troops began to intrude into Serbian territory from seven bordering posts at midnight on April 2. They were composed of two main columns and five auxiliary units. According to the Serbian sources, the first column was led by "Dajo, Kalčo, Usejn Kapitan, Stojče, Sermaninac, Imer Arap, Argir, Memed Ali kapetan, Nuri Efendi," and others. The commander-in-chief of this column was someone nicknamed "Ičko." The column accompanied three auxiliary units from the left side. They attacked two bridges over the Vardar River. The second column was led by "Capt. Tomo Ikonomov and Capt. Hüseyin Efendi." Among the officers were Lieutenant Nikolov and Aleksandar Kozakov. Stojčo Kapitan and "Jašar-bey" were among the voevodes. Half of the column was composed of Turks, and the rest were Bulgarians. The column seemed to be a diversionary force and attacked Valandovo. 62 There are various estimations as to the number of troops that participated in the operation. The Serbian authorities claimed that it was more than 3,000,63 but that seems impossible. A Serb guerrilla, Vasilije Trbić, estimated that it was "more than 500."64 Based on archival information of VMORO, Dimitar Gotsev asserts that the number was around 1,000, composed of 400 VMORO guerrillas and 600 "militiamen."65

The intruders first attacked the Serbian position immediately north of the Strumitsa station and swiftly occupied it. But the rebels could not reach the station owing to the decisive defense of the Serbian garrison there. As late as the evening of April 2 the vicinity of the Strumitsa station was cleared of enemies. ⁶⁶ Another fight took place near two bridges over the Vardar. Ensuing fierce battle forced the outnumbered Serb garrison to retreat. Komitadjis succeeded in controlling one of the bridges, but only temporarily. Serb reinforcements from Gevgelija arrived shortly afterward and recovered the position before the komitadjis finished planting explosives. By eleven in the morning the battles over the bridges had ended. The attempt to blow them up failed. Minor skirmishes lasted until late evening, by which time the guerrillas had mainly retreated into Bulgarian territory. ⁶⁷

In Valandovo guerrillas were more successful. They encircled the town in the early morning and began attacking the Serbian positions. The Serb garrison was totally annihilated in the ensuing battle, and the komitadjis secured control over the town and surrounding area by noon. They declared that Valandovo was liberated and furnished the town with Bulgarian flags. The komitadjis controlled the town for more than eleven hours then triumphantly withdrew and dispersed in various directions the next day. A Serb officer who entered the village immediately after the retreat of the guerrillas witnessed more than 150 corpses of Serb soldiers and totally burned army barracks and other military institutions.

Although the guerrillas could not achieve their main objective—destruction of bridges—the Valandovo affair was no doubt a great military success for them. VMORO claims that Serbs lost 470 soldiers and 7 officers in the battle, while the guerrillas had around 40 casualties. ⁷⁰ Serbian sources admit that the damage to the guerrillas was much less than to the Serbs. A total of 213 Serb soldiers were killed on the spot, and 84 were injured. ⁷¹ The death toll finally reached 281. ⁷² The Serb authorities found no more than 40 corpses of guerrillas. ⁷³

Different observations have been made on the objectives of the attack. According to Dimitar Gotsev, a Bulgarian historian, the attack was planned and prepared by VMORO with an intention to retaliate against Serbs for their persecution of Bulgarian civilians. The main forces were led by the VMORO voevodes, and the Turkish bands led by Hüseyin Hakkı played only an auxiliary role. Hut Turkish sources claim that Muslim guerrillas took the lead. Celal Perin confirms that the Turkish detachment made a surprise attack, inflicting huge damage on their enemies. Hüsamettin Ertürk alleges that the attack was planned and implemented on the initiative of Çolak İbrahim. He also alleges: "As a result of the event, Serbs declared war against Bulgaria." Likewise, Fuat

Balkan highly praises the effect of the attack and asserts that it was the major turning point for Bulgarian entry into World War I.⁷⁷ Both of them obviously misinterpret the course of history, but their exaggeration shows that the Ottoman side had the intention to create a situation in which Bulgaria would inevitably side with the Central Powers. This corresponded exactly to the plan of a leader of VMORO, Aleksandar Protogerov. He had been pursuing the strategy of redirecting the Bulgarian policy to "national unification" since the end of the Second Balkan War. From the onset he deemed Bulgarian entry into the Triple Alliance to be necessary.⁷⁸ The joint operation with the Turks, he expected, would have the effect of forcing the Bulgarian government to side with the Central Powers. Another element was involved in the operation. Fuat Balkan asserts that the attack was jointly planned by the Ottoman and German general staffs, 79 but his view needs some corrections. The Serbian intelligence noticed some Austrian officers in Strumitsa on previous days of the operation. Its postmortem claimed to find one corpse of an Austrian soldier. 80 It is probable that Austrians, not Germans, were directly involved in the affair. Vienna had a plan to take part in the Bulgarian-Ottoman operation in the hope of precipitating Bulgarian entry in the war.⁸¹

For a while the scheme seemed to work well. According to the Serbian Army, even though a certain number of Turks and Austrians took part, the majority of the troops wore Bulgarian uniforms. Based on this inaccurate information the Serbian government considered the attack to be a part of operations in a Bulgarian "undeclared war." It sent a letter of protest to Sofia on April 3 and subsequently issued an official communiqué declaring that Bulgarian troops had attacked Serbian territory and denounced Sofia's actions as a grave violation of neutrality.

The strong tone of the Serbian reproach, however, did not reflect its real intention. Nikola Pašić knew well the vulnerability of his country now enduring the Austrian offensive near its western border. The Bulgarian entry into the enemy's camp would signify catastrophe. The Bulgarian government shared the same consideration. Taking advantage of its strong bargaining position, Sofia ridiculed Serbian protest with a verbal note and repudiated responsibility. It even asserted that the event was an internal matter in which the indigenous Muslim population revolted against the Serbian authorities. 855

The Valandovo affair, after all, did not produce the effect expected by its initiators. Pašić believed that it would give some moral ground not to concede to the territorial voracity of Bulgaria. The Entente powers supported the Serbian claims, but only ostensibly. They still hoped for Bulgarian entry into their camp and did not want to provoke Sofia too much over such trivia. So On his part Vasil Radoslavov realized that the adventurous actions of VMORO would narrow the room to maneuver for higher stakes in the ongoing diplomatic game. He decided on restraint and reproached Kosta Tsipushev, chief of VMORO's Strumitsa branch: Be careful and don't damage the prestige of Bulgaria. As a result the VMORO slowed down its military activities: there was no further action until mid-October 1915.

CONCLUSION

Although the partnership of the VMORO and Turkish special force did not produce desired results from a political point of view, it may have had other merits. By the beginning of this joint activity Muslims harbored a strong grudge against the Bulgarian revolutionaries. Bulgarian komitadjis had committed dreadful atrocities against Muslims since the end of the nineteenth century. The persecution was at its peak during the Balkan Wars, when komitadjis began massive destruction of Muslim villages. Vivid memories of forced conversions were another source of animosity. Muslim resentment was so strong that Serbs could easily mobilize Turks and Albanians for their cleansing operation against Bulgarian guerrillas during the Second Balkan War. 89 Such a hostile atmosphere, however, quickly disappeared after the arrival of Turkish guerrillas. They propagated a plan of an autonomous state in which Muslims and Bulgarians would share power and succeeded in persuading Muslims of the necessity to cooperate with Bulgarians. As a result Muslims became much friendlier toward Bulgarians. 90 This change in turn encouraged Bulgarians to be more sympathetic to their Muslim neighbors. As Fuat Balkan put it: "The Bulgarians were completely satisfied with the joint activities as the Turks in Serbia stopped attacking the Macedonian Bulgarians."91

It is also true that the secret cooperation between VMORO and the Turkish special force was based on an extremely sober and realistic assessment of the new situation. The VMORO's agenda was to throw Macedonia into renewed turmoil, thereby creating conditions for territorial reassessment. For the Turks, the worst scenario was the revival of the Balkan League. Each side decided on collaboration as the best tactic on the assumption that the enemy of your enemy is your friend. This has been difficult for nationalist historians to weave harmoniously into the moralistic texture of their narratives. Therefore Bulgarian and Turkish historiographies have long neglected this topic and are still not in a position

to assess it appropriately. But one thing is certain. Although the extent of the collaboration's political and military effects is unclear, it no doubt contributed to an amelioration of mutual resentment between two peoples and thus paved the way for the forthcoming military alliance. Turks and Bulgarians succeeded in coordinating joint military operations during World War I, and the cooperation lasted even during the Turkish War of Independence.⁹²

APPENDIX

Askeri Tarih ve Stratejik Etüt Başkanlığı Arşivi/Turkish General Staff Military History Archives (ATASE) has a huge collection of documents issued by the various sections of the Ottoman army. I found the following documents during research in March 2013.

Document 1

A proposal of Kemal Bey, the military attaché of Sofia, to the war minister, İsmail Enver Paşa, on how to frustrate the Serbian plan of conscription of the Muslim population (ATASE, BDH, Klesör 232 Dosya 960, Fihrist 16).

Harbiye Nazırı Enver Paşa hazretlerine Sofya ataşe militeri Kemal Bey'den mavrud şifredir Fi 12 Kanun-u Sani 1914, ve fi 13 Kanun-u Sani vürudu Numara 728

Sırplar Makedonya'da silah istimal edebilecek İslamları muharebeye sevk etmektedir. Buna işe yaramayan erkekleri hicret ettirmek veyahut bunların heyet-i umumiyesini isyan ettirmek suretiyle Sırpları mezkur kuvvetten mahrum bırakmak cihetiyle bir metin tatbiği muvaffak olur emrindeyim. Bulgarların isyan hareketine iştirak etmeyecekleri maruzdur.

English Translation

A ciphered telegram from the Sofia military attaché [Mustafa] Kemal Bey to his excellency, war minister [İsmail] Enver Paşa. January, 25, 1914

Serbs are recruiting military-aged Muslims. I am sure that we can deprive them of those forces either by encouraging the exile of those who are not applicable or by letting the general committee instigate them into an uprising. It is requested that the Bulgarians would not participate in the insurrection.

Document 2

A report of the Turkish consul of Skopje on sabotage by the Bulgarian guerrillas (ATASE BDH K,232, D. 960, F 2-2).

Üsküp şehbenderliği 20 Teşrin-i Evvel 1914

Üsküp'ten İştip'e sevk olundukları evvelce arz olunan iki tabur müstahfiz efraddan bir taburunun dört adet eski küçük çapta Fransız toplarıyla mücehhez olarak kasaba-yı mezkuraya vasıl oldukları ve diğer bir tabur ile yine bir bataryalık gayr-ı miktar ve gayr-ı harp topların da henüz yolda bulunduğu bu kere mevsukan istihbar kılınmıştır. Bu gün de mahal-i mezkurdan şehbender-haneye müracaat eden bir zatın ifadesine nazaran İştip belediyesi önünde evvel gece Bulgar komutaları tarafından mevzu bir bomba istimal edilmiştir. Bu babda alınacak malumat-ı sairenin de.

English Translation

From the Turkish consulate in Skopje, November 9, 1914.

As I have reported, two reserve battalions left Skopje for Shtip [Štip]. A trustworthy source confirms that one of them has arrived at the town with four old and small caliber French cannons. The same source witnesses that the other battalion is on the way, and it accompanies another reserve artillery battery. According to the witness who came to our office today from the above-mentioned region, the Bulgarian guerrillas yesterday exploded a bomb that they had placed in front of the city hall.

Document 3

A report of the Turkish consul in Skopje, reporting the Serb reaction to the Bulgarian guerrilla activities (ATASE BDH K,232, D. 960, F 2).

Üsküp şehbenderliği 17 Teşrin-i Evvel 1914

Bulgar komutalarına mahsus harekatlarına binaen buradan iki tabur müstafhaz efrad ile bir iki küçük kıta da top İştip'e sevk olunmuştur. Sırplar işbu komitacılardan fevkalade kuşku alınıp havf ve endişe içinde bulunduklarından alelhusus Tikveş karyesi İslamlarını ve sair bazı kura-yı Bulgar ve ahali-yi İslamiyesi pek ziyade tazyik altında bulundurup komutalarına betatlık etmemeleri için daha evvelden gözlerini korkutmakta bulundukları mevsukan mustahbardır. Hatta yine bu endişe-yi naşiriyle bir aksül'amelden korkarak ahiren silah altına alınan bazı Bulgarları

terhis ettikleri dahi istihbar edilmiş ise de bu babda daha ziyade tahkikatı hazır edilip neticesinin zeylen hazır olunacağı tabidir. Ol babda.

English Translation

From the Turkish consulate in Skopje, October 30, 1914.

As a reaction to the activities of the Bulgarian guerrillas, two garrison battalions with two small artillery detachments were dispatched to Shtip [Štip]. Serbs are extremely anxious about the guerrillas and are in a state of fear and suspicion. Therefore they are seriously oppressing the Muslims in Tikveš as well as the Bulgarian and Muslim population in some villages. A trustworthy source confirms that the Serbs have long been watchful lest the population should lend support to the guerrillas. The widespread anxiety made them fear the reaction, and it is even rumored that they have discharged some Bulgarian draftees. It goes without saying that we should investigate this more, and the result will be reported afterward.

Document 4

A report of the Turkish embassy in Sofia to the War Ministry, concerning the Bulgarian-Muslim activities (ATASE BDH K,232, D. 960, F 8).

Harbiye Nezaret-i celilesine

Fi 26 Zilhicce ve fi 2 Teşrin-i Sani 1330

27 Teşrin-i Evvel 1330 tarihli ve 56782/1682 numaralı tezkere-yi seniyeye zeyldir.

Müslimlerden mürekkep çetelerle Bulgar komitaların harekatına ve İştip'e kuvve-yi askeriye ve top sevk olunduğuna dair Üsküp şehbenderliğinden Belgrad sefaret-i seniyesine gönderilmiş olan dört kıta tahriratın suretleri tesyar kılındı. Bunların birer nüshası da Dahiliye Nezaretine irsal olundu efendim.

English Translation

To his excellency, the war minister.

November 15, 1914

An addendum to the official note of No. 56782/1682 dating from November 9, 1914.

Our consulate of Skopje sent the Turkish embassy in Belgrade four notes on the joint activities between Muslim bands and Bulgarian guerrillas as well as on the dispatch of the battalions and artilleries to Shtip. We have forwarded all of them to the Interior Ministry.

Document 5

A report of the Turkish consulate in Skopje, reporting on a battle between the Serb forces and Bulgarian guerrillas (ATASE, BDH, Klesör 232, Dos. 960, Fihrist 2-1).

Üsküb şehbenderliğinden 20 Teşrin-i Sani 1914 tarihli tahriratı suretidir. Eyyam ihbarcıda komutacıların faaliyeti ziyadeleşmiş olup, burada Kumanova mülhakatından Tchetrista ile Carhathanlar nam mahallede Bulgar komutacıları ile Sırb asakiri arasında şiddetli bir müsademe vuku bulmuştur. Tarafından epeyce maktul ve mecruh var ise de yalnız ağır yaralı olarak dört Bulgar ile iki İslam'ın rey-i tedavi buraya getirildikleri maruzdur ol babda.

Sefaret-i seniyeden.

English Translation

A copy of the report sent from the Skopje consulate on December 3, 1914 According to the daily news, the Bulgarians are intensifying the guerrilla activities. It is reported that serious fighting took place between the Bulgarian guerrillas and the Serb forces in the villages called Četrista and Džarhathanlar in the Kumanovo directorate. Many are dead or injured in the both camps. Out of the victims, four seriously wounded Bulgarians and two Muslims have been brought to Skopje for treatment.

NOTES

- 1. Petur Durvingov, *Istoria na makedono-odrinskoto opulchenie*, 26–27.
- 2. Makedonski Nauchen Institute (MNI), Natsionalno-osvoboditelnoto dvizhenie na makedonskite i trakiyskite Bulgari, 1878–1944, 249–58.
- 3. E. Statenova and S. Gruncharov, *Istoria na nova Bulgaria 1878–1944*, 255.
- 4. Instirutot za Natsionalna Istoriya (INI), *Istoriya Makedonskog naroda*, 300.
- 5. Durvingov, *Istoria*, 1, 10–14.
- 6. Mehmed Hyusein, Pomatsite i Turbeshite v Mizia, Trakia i Makedonia, 84.
- 7. V. Georgiev and S. Trifonov, *Pokrustvaneto na Bulgarite Mohamedani*, 1912–1913, 6–7.
- 8. Hyusein, Pomatsite, 85-88.
- 9. Ibid., 106.
- Svetlozar Eldurov, "Bulgarskata pravoslavna tsurkva i bulgarskite myusyulmani 1878–1944 g."
- 11. Hyusein, Pomatsite, 115-16.
- 12. Nurettin Şimşek, Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa'nın Reisi Süleyman Askeri Bey, 63-64.
- 13. Tevfik Bıyıklıoğlu, Trakya'da Milli Mücadele.
- 14. Hüner Tuncer, Osmanlı'nın Rumeli'yi Kaybı, 1878–1914, 163–64.

- 15. Şimşek, Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa'nın Reisi Süleyman Askeri Bey, 68–70.
- 16. Ibid., 70.
- 17. Bıyıklıoğlu, Trakya'da Milli Mücadele, 79-83.
- 18. Djemal Pasha, Memories of a Turkish Statesman, 1913–1919, 50.
- 19. Lyubomir Miletich, Razorenieto na trakiyskite Bulgari prez 1913 godina.
- 20. Stayko Trifonov, Trakia, 66.
- 21. Valentin Kitanov, Aspekti na politicheskite otnoshenia na VMRO s Turtsia, 1903–1914 g., 168–76.
- 22. Statenova and Gruncharov, *Istoria*, 286–87; Tuncer, *Osmanlı'nın Rumeli'yi Kaybı*, 166.
- 23. M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, ed., Kendi Mektuplarında Enver Paşa, 178.
- 24. Djemal Pasha, Memories of a Turkish Statesman, 50.
- 25. Trifonov, *Trakia*, 65–66.
- 26. Ibid., 66.
- 27. Djemal Pasha, Memories of a Turkish Statesman, 53-53.
- 28. Kitanov, Aspekti, 172-73.
- 29. As discussed below, by the time the official overture of Grigor Nachovich started in the middle of August, the VMORO leadership had conceived the idea of military cooperation with the Ottomans. The idea first came from the organization, then the government usurped it, noticing its usefulness for its own purpose: to satisfy the Ottomans without concluding a formal military treaty. The strategy worked well for a time, as the CUP leaders were taken in. They believed that the cooperation with VMORO was a de facto military alliance with Bulgaria. Later, however, this was to create a difficult dilemma for both the government and the organization. The government had to grant almost a free hand to the military and diplomatic activities of VMORO. In turn VMORO had to provide political support to the king and his government. Aleksandar Protogerov expressed the dilemma as follows: "As we have committed ourselves to the Turks, we cannot openly denounce the king and his government. Because this would mean a war with the Turks" (Bulgarski Istoricheski Arhiv/Bulgarian Historical Archive, Sofia [hereafter BIA], Narodna Biblioteka Sv. Kiril i Metodii/National Library of St. Kyrilos and St. Methodius [hereafter NBKM]), f. 189, a.e. 7, l. 23).
- 30. MNI, Natsionalno-osvoboditelnoto dvizhenie, 333.
- 31. Ibid., 335-38.
- 32. VMRO prez pogleda na neynite osnovateli, 182–87.
- 33. Ts. Biliarski and V. Kitanov, *Ofitsialnata i taynata bulgaro-turska diplomatsia* (1903–1925 g.), 134–35, 137–40.
- 34. Ibid., 149.
- 35. Fuat Balkan, Komitacı, 25, 26.
- 36. Celal Perin, Batı Trakya'nın Bitmeyen Çilesi, 40.
- 37. Ts. Biliarski and I. Burilkova, eds., *Butreshnata makedono-odrinska revolyutsionalna organizatsia* (1893–1919 g.), 1076.
- 38. Valentin Kitanov, "The Secret Policy of VMRO with Turkey, 1903–1924," 149.
- 39. Şimşek, Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa'nın Reisi Süleyman Askeri Bey, 110–11, 112–13.
- 40. Trifonov, Trakia, 66 79-80.
- 41. Ibid., 79-80.

- 42. Dimitar Gotsev, *Natsionalno-osvoboditelnata borba v Makedoniya, 1912–1915* (Sofia: Bulgarskata Akademiya na Naukite, 1981), 134.
- 43. Ibid.
- 44. Perin, Batı Trakya'nın Bitmeyen Çilesi, 40-41.
- 45. Ahmed Tetik, ed., Sofya Askeri Ataşesi Mustafa Kemal'in Raporları, 128.
- 46. Hüsamettin Ertürk, İki Devrin Perde Arkası, 145.
- 47. Tetik, Sofya Askeri Ataşesi, 146-47.
- 48. Ibid., 148.
- 49. Ibid., 69.
- 50. Andrej Mitrović, Serbia's Great War, 1914–1918, 127.
- 51. Tetik, Sofya Askeri Ataşesi, 147.
- 52. Gotsev, Natsionalna-osvoboditelnata borba, 144-45.
- 53. Tetik, Sofya Askeri Ataşesi, 149.
- 54. Ljubomir M. Marić, "Valandovski zločin i njegove žrtve," *Ratnik* (April 1930): 21.
- 55. Gotsev, Natsionalna-osvoboditelnata borba, 145–47.
- 56. Marić, "Valandovski zločin," 20.
- 57. MNI, Natsionalno-osvoboditelnoto dvizhenie, 343.
- 58. Dragiša Kecojević, "Valandovski pokolj na Veliki Petak 20. Marta 1915. godine," 96.
- 59. Ibid., 93.
- 60. Ibid., 93-94.
- 61. Ibid., 100.
- 62. Ibid., 100-102.
- 63. Marić, "Valandovski zločin," 24.
- 64. Vasilije Trbić, Memoari, Kaživanja i Dogažaji Vojvode Veleškog (1912–1918, 1941–1946), 45.
- 65. Gotsev, Natsionalna-osvoboditelnata, 147.
- 66. Marić, "Valandovski zločin," 25-26.
- 67. Kecojević, "Valandovski pokolj," 108–14.
- 68. MNI, Natsionalno-osvoboditelnoto dvizhenie, 342–43.
- 69. Pavle Blažarić, Memoari, 213.
- 70. Gotsev, Natsionalna-osvoboditelnata borba, 147.
- 71. Marić, "Valandovski zločin," 29.
- 72. Kecojević, "Valandovski pokolj," 123.
- 73. Marić, "Valandovski zločin," 29.
- 74. Gotsev, Natsionalna-osvoboditelnata, 147.
- 75. Perin, Batı Trakya'nın Bitmeyen Çilesi, 42.
- 76. Ertürk, İki Devrin Perde Arkası, 146.
- 77. Balkan, Komitacı, 48-49.
- 78. BIA NBKM, f. 189, a.e. 7, l. 23.
- 79. Balkan, Komitaci, 48.
- 80. Kecojević, "Valandovski pokolj," 131.
- 81. Ivan Ilchev, Bulgaria i Antantata prez Purvata svetovna voyna, 160.
- 82. Marić, "Valandovski zločin," 24.
- 83. Mitrović, Serbia's Great War, 128.
- 84. Kecojević, "Valandovski pokolj," 127.
- 85. Vasil Radoslavov, Dnevni belezhki, 1914–1916, 124.

- 86. Ilchev, Bulgaria, 161.
- 87. Gotsev, Natsionalna-osvoboditelnata borba, 148.
- 88. Mitrović, Serbia's Great War, 128.
- 89. Djordji Anadžiev, Balkanskite vojni i Mekedonija, 146–47.
- 90. Gotsev, Natsionalna-osvoboditelnata borba, 134-35.
- 91. Balkan, *Komitaci*, 26-27.
- 92. Nurcan Fidan, "Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nda Türk-Bulgar ortak harekatı," 71–92.

The Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa and World War I

Yücel Yiğit

One hotly debated issue of World War I is the role of the Ottoman Empire's Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa (TM). Its activities have been exaggerated and mythologized either as a heroic organization that fought to save the state or as a killing machine that destroyed the Armenians. Vahakn Dadrian, a leading scholar of the Armenian genocide thesis, has argued that the TM was established to carry out the deportation and killing of the Armenians in Anatolia. In contrast, Guenter Lewy, who examined this work, concludes that Dadrian distorted the sources to promote his political position. Lewy argues that the TM did not have a major role in implementing the 1915 deportation of Armenians from eastern Anatolia or in the subsequent raids on the convoys of defenseless Armenians that resulted in many of them being killed. Hilmar Kaiser, an expert on the events of 1915, aptly argues:

One should stop thinking of the CUP [Committee of Union and Progress] as a kind of monolithic party. Research on the Armenians in WWI has tended to try to create the impression of a Turkey that was like a small version of Nazi Germany, with a single party and with a poor man's SS named Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa. I think this is totally wrong; one has to study the Turkish-Armenian case on its own.³

Other than journalistic publications since the 1990s, academic works in both English and Turkish on the Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa are scarce due to the paucity of documents on the organization and limited access to Ottoman government archives. Despite the limited information on the

TM, two main perceptions about the Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa persist. The first depicts it as a modern intelligence agency that was established amid the modernization efforts of the late Ottoman Empire, especially after the establishment of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) regime in 1908. According to this view the Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa was the early foundation of the National Intelligence Organization (Milli İstihbarat Teşkilatı, MİT) of modern Turkey. This view treats the TM as if it were an early example of the modern European intelligence agency, such as the British Secret Intelligence Service. It views the Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa as an official and organized body with a bureaucratic and hierarchical structure along with a specific limited field of operation and mission within the Ottoman state.⁴

The second approach to Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa is that it was a *çete* (vigilante band). According to this view, the TM was a semiofficial and autonomous security structure aiming to protect the state from internal and external threats. This approach treats the TM as an underground, unorganized, unscrutinized, and loosely structured body with patriotic members who were willing to sacrifice themselves in the name of saving the state. The conceptualization of the organization as a cete has negative connotations as well, however: it also refers to a group of unruly (*başıbozuk*) adventurers who pursued their self-interests outside any set of legal boundaries, contradicting the stated interests of the organization.⁵

The common problem in this dichotomous approach to understanding and conceptualizing the TM is that the terms "intelligence" and "band" are considered mutually exclusive, as if an intelligence organization cannot adopt a structure and strategies of a band and a band cannot function as an intelligence-collecting body. This mutually exclusive understanding is perhaps due to a more important problem. Scholarship has decontextualized the TM from its own space and time by disregarding the political, military, and socioeconomic conditions of the Ottoman Empire within which the TM emerged and evolved.

Polat Safi's dissertation provides an excellent analysis of the TM by sparing the organization from conceptual anachronisms and framing it within an Ottoman context. In placing the question of what the TM is at the center of his analysis, Safi highlights certain characteristics of the organization. He recognizes that it functioned both as an intelligence organization and as a vigilante band. Safi asserts that the organization gathered intelligence to aid its own operations instead of feeding intelligence to outside sources. It also disseminated psychological propaganda to win the hearts and minds of Muslim communities in enemy territories and

engaged in unconventional military "techniques[,] includ[ing] raids, ambushes, hit and run, sabotage, etc." In the light of this conceptual clarification, I argue that the TM as an official state body mostly was involved in intelligence-gathering duties, while the TM as the strongest instrument of the Committee of Union and Progress mostly functioned as a vigilante group involved in raids, developing and supporting counterinsurgency strategies by organizing local populations against enemy forces and undertaking counterterrorism initiatives and assassination attempts against opponents. Safi fails to explore this dual nature of the TM, however, and ignores the context within which the TM emerged and evolved.

The typical translation of Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa as "Special Organzation" also needs to be deconstucted.⁷ Philip Stoddard was one of the earliest scholars to use this translation, in the early 1960s. He justified doing so because the three leading members of the CUP (Enver Paşa, Cemal Paşa, and Talat Paşa) each established his own organization, and the TM was Enver's enterprise.⁸ Thus Stoddard refers to the "personal" or "private" aspect (*mahsusa*) of the TM. While Teşkilat can be translated literally as "organization," translating *mahsusa* as "special" gives a different connotation than translating it as "private" or "personal." It is perhaps problematic even to try to translate Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa into other languages, because this decontextualizes its meaning from its own space and time within the Ottoman context. For this reason I prefer to use "TM" instead of translating it as "Special Organization."

The question of what the TM was in terms of its nature, organization, and tactics is important. Earlier scholarship ignored this question, but Safi's and Stoddard's studies shed light on it. Yet their works focus mostly on the conceptual, and perhaps methodological, weaknesses in the literature. A more fundamental and crucial question, which is more theoretical than conceptual, needs to be explored as well: why and under what conditions do state elites decide to establish organizations such as the TM? What would this tell us about the capacity and power of such a state? Deeper contextualization of the TM would be unsuccessful without raising this fundamental theoretical issue. Turning attention to the concept of state capacity not only helps us understand the nature of the TM but also improves our knowledge of the psyche of the founders of TM within the context of a weakening state and state power. Is it a weak or a strong state that seeks to establish such an organization upon a formal and informal basis? Or is the formation of such organizations the result of an ineffective state? Placing the TM within this theoretical framework can lead us to better insights in understanding and explaining the emergence of the organization and its evolution over time. We

can also understand its background, mind-set, and discourse, which were built on saving and protecting the state in reaction to domestic peripheral insurgencies on the one hand and external intervention into the domestic affairs of the Ottoman state on the other. While the first threat caused traumatic territorial losses for the empire, the second threat caused the loss of both internal and external sovereignty for the Ottoman state.

In the light of these questions, this chapter has four interrelated arguments. First, without understanding the komitadji counterstate insurgency experiences of the Ottoman state in the Balkans prior to the Young Turk revolution in 1908, understanding and explaining the background psyche of the TM would be incomplete. Second, this study discusses the state of the Ottoman Empire after its defeat in the Russian War of 1877– 78 and the Balkan Wars of 1912–13.9 The Ottoman state was in decline and was becoming a failed state in the post-1878 era, so placing the TM in this context of the Ottoman state reveals the reasons for the foundation of the TM. Third, this chapter specifically looks at the relationship between the CUP and the TM within a conceptual framework. Finally, this study elaborates and critiques the arguments of some scholars who assert that the TM played a major role in the massacres of Armenians during World War I. The purpose here is to establish the nature of the relationship between the CUP and the TM by analyzing the relationship between the Unionist fedais (self-sacrificing volunteers) and the TM in particular. Overall, the TM fulfilled diverse and sometimes conflicting functions due to the changing circumstances of the state and needs of the political elite. But it mostly functioned as a special force to foment insurrection against imperialist European powers, prepare the local Muslim population for guerrilla fighting, raise Muslim political consciousness against colonialism in Libya, Afghanistan, and the Central Asian khanates, and oppose the British-led insurgency in Arabia and Russian activities in the Caucasus. 10 In an attempt to shed light on these arguments, this chapter makes use of documents in the Ottoman Archives in Istanbul, the Republican Archives in Ankara, the ATASE Archives of the Turkish Chief of Staff, and relevant secondary sources.

ESTABLISHING OTTOMAN INTELLIGENCE INSTITUTIONS AND THE TEŞKILAT-I MAHSUSA MIND-SET

The Ottoman Empire from its inception often resorted to the service of certain entities and groups to carry out intelligence-gathering duties, particularly those geared toward military purposes. Yet this modus operandi obviously lacked the institutionalization that came to characterize

intelligence agencies in the twentieth century. The first steps toward institutionalizing intelligence services were taken during the Tanzimat period (1839–78), when reformist leaders restructured nearly all state institutions in the Ottoman Empire in a bid to increase bureaucratic efficiency.

During the Tanzimat period, the first step toward creating an efficient form of intelligence service was taken with the creation of the Hafiyelik Teşkilatı (Organization for Espionage: HT) under the control of the Zaptiye Nezareti (Ottoman Police Ministry: ZN). This first secret intelligence service, with expressed interest in homeland security, was established during the reign of Sultan Abdülmecid (1839–61). Yet the arbitrary operations of the HT, such as random arrests, detentions and everincreasing lawless methods, necessitated some changes to revamp the image of the secret service. Accordingly, in order to establish a Europeanstyle secret intelligence service in the Ottoman Empire, Sefels Soldenhof, a secretary of the Ottoman Embassy in Paris, was given the task of investigating the organizational structure of the French intelligence service. Based on his report, the secret service was reorganized. On the recommendation of the British ambassador, Stratford Canning, Civinis Efendi became the first head of the TM.¹¹

Although some scholars claim that Sultan Abdülaziz (1861-76) neglected the HT, Sultan Abdülhamid II (1876–1909) deemed it crucial to the success of his rule, leading to its revival as the Yıldız Teşkilatı (Yildiz Intelligence Service: YT). 12 After the CUP came to power, however, the Yildiz Intelligence Service was abolished and its archives were destroyed. It should be noted that the reason behind the destruction of the organization was not simple hostility toward the reign of Sultan Abdülhamid II. Rather there was concern about the potential leakage of intelligence information, which could reveal the secret relations of the Yıldız Intelligence Service with people who were close to the CUP or influential in military and politics. To overcome this fear and to eliminate the possibility of exposing information about the activities of spies, the YT archives were set on fire in the backyard of the Harbiye Nezareti (Ministry of War). The destruction of these files prevents researchers from gaining reliable and better information about YT activities, at least in some sense. After the YT was abolished, its intelligence-gathering duties temporarily were transferred to the Emniyet-i Umumiye (Police Department), directed by Miralay Galip Bey.¹³ The CUP members, influenced by German military institutions and culture, considered the operation of a secret intelligence agency vitally important for successful military operations and quickly decided to establish a new organization, leading to the formation of the TM. This new organization was different in its institutional norms, operational strategies, and close relations among its members, all of whom shared the same goal of saving the state and had been socialized within the insurgency and counterinsurgency context of the Balkans.

The TM acted more like a special forces unit than a typical intelligence service. Also, the functions of the TM varied according to changing dynamics and the needs of the state in the Balkans and the Caucasus. The TM's duties ranged from intelligence-gathering to local militia activities, such as preparing the groundwork for easier maneuvers of Ottoman armies in enemy territory, creating çetes to initiate guerrilla warfare, or simply gathering information about the enemy forces. In an attempt to improve its operational capabilities, the TM obtained financial and technical support from the German intelligence services. Unlike the YT under the Hamidian regime, however, the TM came under the control of many individuals with a komitadji mind-set. 14 A komitadji was a member of one of the counterstate guerrilla organizations that emerged in the Balkans after the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–78 and set the pattern for the national-independence struggles in the Balkans. The komitadji repertoires of activities punctuated the political struggles in the Macedonian insurgency. These radicalized revolutionary groups with separatist intentions formed secret and irregular political-military networks to undermine state authority. The revolutionary networks freely resorted to tactics of rebellion, assassination, and political organization of local groups to fight against Ottoman rule. These tactics, when deployed on behalf of Ottoman rule, contributed positively to Ottoman war efforts, as evidenced during the Tripolitanian War of 1911-12, the Balkan War of 1912–13, World War I, and the Turkish War of Independence (1919–23). Due to this komitadji mind-set, the TM cannot be considered solely an intelligence agency.

CONTEXTUALIZING THE CUP AND THE TEŞKILAT-I MAHSUSA

The CUP's "identity was informed by the fear that the Ottoman state would collapse and the Muslims would be colonized by major European powers." This CUP fear no doubt was embedded in the experiences of insurgencies and counterinsurgencies in the Balkans, especially after the Treaty of Berlin in 1878, which created an international political system based on the (presumed) principle of national homogenization. ¹⁶

After 1878 the rise of the Balkan insurgent komitadjis against the Ottoman state, such as the Albanian komitadjis in 1880 and the Macedonian komitadjis in 1896, along with other counterstate insurgencies such as that among Armenians in 1896, convinced the Ottoman military and political elites that conventional war strategies would be insufficient to fight them.¹⁷ Thus the Ottoman counterinsurgency tactics imitated the counterstate komitadji organization and mind-set that involved unconventional military activism along with a loosely knit network of self-sacrificing volunteer fighters (fedais). The early CUP members thought that saving the state would be possible through a komitadji-style struggle.

Imititating the Balkan komitadji struggle as a means of saving the state, however, also was related directly to the weakening capacity of the Ottoman Empire in military and economic affairs. After the Treaty of Berlin the Balkan insurgencies exposed the Ottoman state's military and economic weakness in trying to control revolutionary circles across the Balkans and in the Caucasus. As a result of violent activities by these popular komitadj groups, the multiethnic and multireligious Ottoman Empire began to experience an existential threat to its authority. Fear of complete disintegration became the major source of concern for the state elite. Yet the Ottoman state had very limited financial and military resources to counter this existential threat. Overall, the Treaty of Berlin, as Hakan Yavuz underlines:

triggered a series of processes that led to the demise of the Ottoman Empire by weakening its institutions, underminining its legitimacy, and creating an indefensible territory in the Balkans and Anatolia. Moreover, the treaty exposed Ottoman weaknesses and encouraged peripheral minorities to use them as an opportunity to carve out a state of their own. This created a sense of anxiety among Muslim population over the future of the state and encouraged the search for a new source of legitimacy, which resulted in the construction of a Muslim-only nation. ¹⁸

Any analysis of the TM and the nature of its relationship with the CUP would be incomplete without understanding this background context of the Ottoman state and society in the post-1878 period (which did not change during the rule of Abdülhamid II). If the Ottoman state had been strong enough (in a Weberian sense) to maintain the legitimate use of violence in its own hands, then neither the komitadji tradition nor the TM would have been embraced by CUP leaders in the early twentieth

century. Once the logic of a security organization using komitadji tactics had become acceptable, recruitment into the TM was very inclusive (accepting even prisoners), because the organization relied heavily on volunteer participation. 19 From 1878 until its demise the Ottoman Empire was arguably a failed state. Failed states can be understood as states that are unable "to control territory, borders, and internal legal order and security, and lack the capacity or will to provide services to the citizenry (typically due to some kind of large-scale institutional collapse)."²⁰ The Ottoman Empire after the Balkan Wars (1912–13) turned into even more of a failed state, lacking the power to provide internal security or defend itself against external interventions. This is why a combination of fear, disorder, and secrecy in the struggle against internal and external threats shaped the pysche of the CUP in general and the TM in particular. If we ignore the prevailing political and military context in which the komitadji mind-set emerged, we cannot understand the dual nature of the organization (acting as both an intelligence organization and a vigilante group). In conclusion, the TM "was the anti-imperialist resistance structure of the weak...Ottoman state that had four goals: organizing guerrilla warfare (gayri nizami harb) against occupying forces, preparing Muslim communities behind enemy lines for rebellion, and collecting intelligence for the purposes of building the military, and, if necessary, assassinating those whom it deemed to be a threat to the security of the state "21

MAKING SENSE OF THE TEŞKILAT-I MAHSUSA WITHIN THE CUP FRAMEWORK

The Balkan branch of the CUP took over the political decision-making apparatus and shaped its secondary institutions such as the TM. In other words, understanding the TM requires the understanding of the context of the Balkans and the CUP structure and its self-defined function as the savior of the state and the liberator of the lost territories. As its organization grew in scope, the CUP naturally ran into difficulties in controlling the actions and relations of its members. As a result, the Merkez-i Umumi (Central Committee) in Salonika devised some measures to enable the coordination of CUP activities and to regulate the relations among its members. In the event of disobedience, for instance, the committee usually threatened the member in question with assassination, reminding him of the oath of obedience taken before becoming a member of the committee. Yet such practices fell short of solving the extant discipline

problems. Therefore the CUP established within its ranks a secret organization called fedais—the volunteers who were ready to sacrifice their lives for the committee. These fedais all believed that the Ottoman state was in existential danger, along with the Muslim presence in Anatolia. Only the CUP could save the state and the Muslims from total annihilation. The Central Committee chose the fedais, whose practices played important roles, particularly because they controlled and regulated those who formerly had acted independently of the Central Committee and spread fear and terror among the nonmembers.²² While the idea of the fedais drew its inspiration from the Balkan komitadji practices, which were characterized by their clandestine cell structure and violent activities, the post-Balkan environment played a formative role in the TM's evolution. This idea of establishing such a secret service agency was rooted in the experiences of the founder of the organization, Enver Paşa, who understood the significance of a komitadji-like structure from his armed struggle with fellow soldiers in the Balkans. Thus the Balkan counterinsurgency experience formed a cognitive map of action and identity of the TM recruits.

These incredibly skilled cadres of TM officials shared similar experiences in the Balkans and also shared the belief that the European powers were determined to use the empire's minorities to end the Ottoman state. This perception of the existential threat brought these young people together to "save the state." Accordingly, they were actively engaged in trying to protect the Ottoman state from all major instances of external intervention that progressively weakened the capacity of government institutions. These events included the 1908 Balkan crisis, which resulted in the loss of Bulgaria, Crete, and Bosnia; the Albanian rebellion (1910); the Italian invasion of and war on Libya (1911); the Balkan Wars (1912–13); the reconquest of Edirne from Bulgaria; and the establishment of the Provisional Government of Western Thrace (Garbi Trakya Hükümet-i Muvakkatesi). The members of the TM inner circle were Enver Paşa, Süleyman Askeri Bey, Kuşçubaşı Eşref, Sapancalı Hakkı, Kara Kemal, İzmitli Mumtaz, Yakup Cemil, and Ömer Naci, all of whom had crucial roles in the Balkan Wars and the Bâb-1 Âlî Raid (January 23, 1913). Enver Paşa shaped the inner dynamics of the TM. The defeat of the Balkan Wars forced the Ottoman military to go through a major transformation and modernization process. The German military structure informed these modernization projects, so Enver Paşa wanted the Ottoman military to have its own intelligence and counterintelligence units just like the German military. Moreover, the Ottomans' catastrophic defeat in the

Balkan Wars forced the Ottoman military to realize the importance of military intelligence and counterinsurgency.

The TM was established by the directives of Enver Paşa on November 30, 1913. 23 The TM also was called the Umur-1 Sarkiye Dairesi (Department of Eastern Affairs) or Sube-i Mahsusa in official documents.²⁴ Despite this official date of its foundation, the leadership and members of the TM clearly had been active in earlier war zones to carry out counterinsurgency work by organizing local people to resist occupation. Due to these activies of the key TM members even before its official foundation, some scholars claim that the TM was established much earlier than 1908. This debate over the foundation date indicates that the TM as an organization evolved out of earlier komitadji practices. It was created to check and control the counterinsurgency strategies of the state. Moreover, the weakening Ottoman state realized the power of komitadji-like organizations to defend the homeland. Because key TM members were active during the First Constitutional era, some scholars have claimed—inaccurately—that it was operational during the Tripolitanian War of 1911–12 and the Balkan Wars.²⁵ In this regard the CUP's seizure of power was the immediate context for the foundation of the TM. The name of the organization was first suggested by veterinarian Rasim Bey, and the headquarters of the organization was located in the district of Nuri Osmaniye on Şeref Street. The TM's expenditures were funded through discretionary allocation, but in some instances funds were also collected directly from the public due to the lack of state funds. For instance, correspondence from the Ministry of Interior to the Vilayet of Karesi on November 15, 1915, noted that 283,104 kuruş collected in Balikesir by the Müdafaa-i Milliye Cemiyeti for the TM had not yet been sent to the organization and wanted to know the reasons for the delay.²⁶ Other documents suggest that some provinces sent in aid in kind.²⁷ When the funds were sent late, Ottoman correspondence to local provinces had a harsh tone of warning. For instance, the deputy to the governor of Erzurum, Cemal Bey, said, "TM cannot operate on mere promises"; it needed funds to function.²⁸

Even though the organization served legally at home and abroad, it also conducted some covert operations in the name of the CUP. The TM was the official intelligence agency of the Ottoman Empire during CUP rule, but it was also an underground organization that carried out the clandestine missions of the CUP. But the CUP seems to have wielded direct influence on the TM, particularly because the organization was run by the CUP's top decision-making circle, including Dr. Nazım, Dr. Behaettin Şakir, Atıf Kamcıl, Ahmed Rıza Bey, and police chief (emniyet

umûm müdürü) Aziz Bey. The final decision always was given by Enver Paşa despite the internal power struggle within the opposition groups against him. Talat Paşa, in particular, wanted to influence the TM.²⁹ For example, he wanted CUP officials with military backgrounds to be transferred to the TM so that the CUP would feature more civilian representation. 30 When the armed wing failed, Talat Paşa came to the belief that the TM should engage in more civil political measures. Enver Paşa and Behaettin Şakir Bey, however, argued that the armed wing was necessary for the defense of the homeland.³¹ In this regard Talat Paşa had limited power over the TM's daily activities. During World War I the minister of defense was in full control of TM activities. The main function of the organization was on the war front, not the home front. Talat Paşa's relatively passive role in the TM during World War I also was rooted in his civilian background, particularly when compared with Enver Paşa. Enver, who came from a military background, was still giving directions to the TM when he was abroad and expected its operatives to be loyal to him as if he would return to Anatolia very soon.

This civil and military divide went back to the Bâb-1 Âlî Raid of 1913, which resulted in not only the capture of the central government but also the creation of the TM out of the CUP's former secret body. After the Bâb-1 Âlî Raid those coming from a military background (headed by Enver Bey) began to gain the upper hand among the CUP cadres at the clear expense of the civilian faction. Thus, while Said Halim Paşa, Talat Paşa, Kara Kemal, and Cavid Bey continued to represent the civilian wing of the CUP, the military elites began to be the major decision makers.

Before the TM's official establishment in 1913 its key members had been active in the CUP as its underground cadre. They played a number of political roles during crisis periods. Some scholars also argue that the TM was the clandestine "hand" of the CUP and was used to silence its opponents and keep the CUP in power. Before the revolution of 1908 those who would become key TM members carried out numerous counterinsurgency operations in the Balkans to defend state authority and undermine insurgency strategies of revolutionary komitadji circles. With the restoration of the constitution, the underground cadres took active roles in the asssassinations of opposition figures and became actively involved in the 1913 coup. They played similar roles in the organization of the active resistance in Tripolitania against the Italian invasion, in the reconquest of Edirne from Bulgarian forces, and in the establishment of the Provisional Government of Western Thrace. The assassination of Mahmut Şevket Paşa on June 11, 1913, was carried out by members of the

Freedom and Unity Party (Hürriyet ve İtilaf Partisi) six months after the Bâb-ı Âlî raid. The safety measures and precautions put in place by Enver Paşa and Kuşçubaşı Eşref in the chaotic atmosphere right after the assassination once again illustrated the unique secret intelligence capacities of the Unionists. These examples also clearly show that the underground section of the CUP and the key TM leaders were the same people. Thus the TM was the secret hand of the CUP to be used against its domestic opponents and also a special forces—like, semimilitary structure to defend the state and homeland. Tarık Zafer Tunaya, a leading scholar of the CUP, described the TM as an institution closely connected with the CUP:

The TM has a special place in the history of the CUP. It represents the key characteristic of the CUP members as komitadji, self-sacrificing, [and] activist to carry out cover operation and their power of imagination. Thus, due to these characteristics, the TM was unified with the CUP and played a critical role in those events that shaped the fate of the CUP. The TM had an aura of mystery and also bore the stamp of the experiences in the Balkans.³²

The entire TM membership consisted of patriotic young military officers who had fought together in the Balkans and organized local resistance movements against Balkan komitadjis. Needless to say, the common characteristic among all these officers was being pro-CUP in orientation.³³ Thus the defining characteristics of Balkan komitadjis defined an ordinary member of the TM as well. They were very successful in counterinsurgency tactics but had very little training in how to gather critical intelligence. Kuşçubaşı Eşref argued that "coordination, ideology, and fundraising rarely interested these members of the TM. They were men of action and did what they were ordered to do."34 In fact TM members had had almost no proper education and often did active military service instead of undertaking any training in intelligence gathering or analysis. Yet TM operative units were formed in different parts of the country, beginning in December 1913. These were mostly voluntary groups that included both military officers and civilians who were pro-CUP and had some shared political experience against local opposition groups. Thus the boundary between the CUP and the TM in some cases did not exist at all. Trusted local CUP members would constitute the local branch of the TM.³⁵ The TM drew its manpower from volunteers who had previous experience in the CUP as well as from military officials

who had been referred by higher-ranking officers. For instance, the undersecretary of the minister of war, Mahmud Kamil Bey, sent a letter to the Ministry of Interior stating that the regiment commander, Bekir Sıdkı Efendi, could not cover his daily expenses and requesting help so that he could begin commercial activities and cover expenses.³⁶ While instances of high-level intervention to secure the well-being of TM members sometimes occurred, at times certain problems emerged in the execution of the TM missions on a local level. For instance, according to a document sent from the Ministry of Mail, Telegraph, and Telephone to the Ministry of Interior, the telegraphs that were sent by TM commanders no longer would be accepted by the Ministry of Mail, Telegraph, and Telephone. It is important to note that this document referred to the TM as a militia corps attached to the Local Governments (Hükümet-i Mahalliye).³⁷ These exchanges indicate that the TM was a state institution with deep connections in society via the CUP. It was a boundary security structure between state and society, between formal and informal. The TM was a special unit of the state as much as a band of the CUP.

The close relationship between the CUP and the TM also can be observed in broader economic policies. Both collaborated to ease the detrimental impact of the capitulations and to nationalize the Ottoman economy. Kara Kemal Bey mobilized the artisans in Istanbul and established firms that operated through local funding. Celal Bayar, who served in the TM branch in İzmir, similarly sought to nationalize the domestic economy there. Even though both Kara Kemal Bey and Celal Bayar were primarily Unionists, they were also responsible for commercial operations in the TM.

A close examination of the TM's internal structure reveals that the organization was under the control of the CUP's inner circle. Thus the TM's inner circle also controlled the CUP's central committee. These men sought to save the Ottoman Empire and also to support anti-imperialist movements in the Muslim world. One of the TM's fundamental missions was to organize an Islamic rebellion against the British Empire in India, Afghanistan, and Iran. Externally, Ömer Naci and Ruseni Beyler were assigned to Iran; ³⁸ Süleyman Sefik, Rauf Orbay, and Ubeydullah Bey were assigned to Afghanistan; and Behaettin Şakir and Rıza Bey were assigned to the Caucasus to struggle against the Russians. ³⁹ Internally Cemal Azmi Bey, the former mutasarrıf (subgovernor) of Rize known as "the cruel subgovernor" (sopali mutasarrıf), was assigned as the governor of Trabzon province, which Russian forces had invaded in 1915. These CUP fedais functioned in the sphere of influence of the 3rd Army units, so instances

of confrontations and shows of power between the two structures often occurred. For example, Behaettin Şakir Bey, as the CUP inspector, was in conflict with the commander of the 3rd Army, Vehip Paşa. ⁴⁰ In this regard the relationship between the empire's officials and the TM members was both contentious and collaborative.

After the cabinet of Talat Paşa resigned, the new government under Ahmed İzzet Paşa signed the Mudros Armistice with Britain on October 30, 1918. The CUP leadership left the country for Germany on November 1, 1918. After the surrender the opposition in Istanbul wanted the CUP leaders to be court-martialed, hoping that such a case would cleanse the state institutions of accusations that they were involved in the Armenian massacres and also that trials might win sympathy for the Ottoman state at the Paris Peace Conference. In November 1918 the Fifth Office of the Ottoman Parliament interrogated CUP central committee members to account for the failures during the war and explain the TM's role in the deportation and massacres of Armenians.⁴¹ The minister of the interior, Fethi Bey, informed the deputies that not only Christians but also many Muslims suffered and that these Muslim communities suffered even more than Armenians, Greeks, and some Arabs. 42 Even as the capital was under British occupation, some Muslim deputies challenged the description of events presented by minority (Christian) deputies. The Muslim deputies defended government policies during the war as militarily necessary measures that were taken against those Christian minorities who had openly collaborated with the enemy forces, especially Russia. 43

Deputy Ilyas Sami Bey of Muş challenged the events of 1915 as a one-sided killing, insisting instead that it involved "mutual killing" on both sides. He summarized the destructive nature of Armenian nationalism and then briefed deputies on the Armenian uprising in Van that had resulted in the massacre of 70 percent of the Muslim population there. Sami Bey identified the Van rebellion as the turning point in the Armenian question. After the massacre a cycle of violence went on until the end of the war. He argued that no state, even Britain in the case of Ireland, could tolerate rebellion or collaboration with the enemy. Deputy Matyos Nalbantyan of Kozan challenged Ilyas Sami Bey, however, saying that the state cannot target entire ethnic groups due to the acts of some komitadjis.⁴⁴

Prime minister Said Halim Paşa's testimony in the investigation is a striking example that gives a picture of the revolving doors of secrecy and denial in the intelligence service. When asked about the vicious attacks triggered by the TM, he replied: "These issues have nothing to do with

the Bâb-ı Âlî and the government... In other words, the government had no say in the decision-making process on these matters." In answer to another question about whether he knew about the TM's activities he said: "I learned about it after all that has happened." And then he added: "I insistently and repeatedly asked Enver Paşa to abolish the TM immediately, because it was involved in illegal and unacceptable activities. There was no point in asking for explanations from the Ministry since it either did not answer the questions or brushed the matter aside." Thus Said Halim Paşa noted his lack of influence over the TM, even though he was prime minister.

Other prominent and respected political figures of the era whom the Meclis-i Mebusan interrogated included men such as İbrahim Bey (minister of justice), Şükrü Bey (minister of education), Ahmed Nesimi Bey (foreign affairs minister), Halil Menteşe Bey (president of the Meclis-i Mebusan), and Cavid Bey (minister of finance). They all asserted that issues pertaining to the deportations and massacres in the war zones were a military matter. Therefore such questions should be addressed to those concerned. Cavid Bey noted in his defense that "the allegations made by your office against the government are completely false because these matters are not the products of governmental decision making."46 These examples demonstrate that the CUP ministers who were serving in the Council of Ministers (Meclis-i Vükela) since the official date of the TM's establishment either did not have much information or refused to acknowledge the relationship between the TM and the government. All of these ministers argued that they initially had not been aware of the TM's existence but tried to abolish the TM once they had learned about the organization. While they did not accept any responsibility for the TM's activities, they kept pointing out that the Ministry of War (Harbiye Nezareti), especially Enver Paşa, was responsible for the TM's activities. These former ministers were not wrong to blame Enver Paşa, because as the deputy commander-in-chief he was the sole official who established the TM and later ordered it disbanded. In effect the TM's legal existence was limited to his term in office.

In the subsequent trials of the Divan-1 Harbi Örfi (Courts-Martial) in 1919, however, some CUP members argued the exact opposite of what the former cabinet ministers had claimed about the TM. These military courts, which the new government established after the Ottoman defeat in World War I, accused the CUP government of serious crimes, including the massacres of both Greeks and Armenians. Under pressure from the victorious powers, especially Britain, the government decided

to convene military tribunals for CUP leaders accused of killing Ottoman Christians. ⁴⁷ In these courts some officials tried to link the TM to the killings of Christians. The public remained very skeptical of these politically charged courts. Many believed that the trials were motivated by personal vengeance and also instigated by British officials. Following the Greek occupation of İzmir, many people turned against these political trials that functioned under the British command.

Defense lawyer Celaleddin Arif Bey argued that the TM was an Ottoman imperial special force outfit. Its personnel were civil servants as well as military officers who were paid by the government. Likewise, Mithat Şükrü Bleda, Ziya Gökalp, Cevat Bey, and Atıf Bey all proclaimed that the TM was supported, directed, and paid by the government. It is not surprising that Sadrazam Talat Paşa, Mithat Şükrü Bleda, Ziya Gökalp, Cevat Bey, and Atıf Bey all wrote in their memoirs that the TM was an official state organization. Cevat Bey in his defense described the existence of CUP members both in government offices and on the battle-front as national service based on patriotism. He said that he helped the CUP only to gather volunteers from the CUP provincial branches. He flatly denied the alleged link between a secret underground organization and the CUP.

Dadrian, who established Armenian genocide studies, described the TM as the CUP's main instrument to destroy the Armenians. He argues that the TM's mission "was to deploy in remote areas of Turkey's interior and to ambush and destroy convoys of Armenian deportees," because its "principal duty was the execution of the Armenian genocide." 52 Philip Stoddard's important 1963 Ph.D. dissertation, which is based on extensive research on Ottoman documents about TM activities, rejects this characterization of the TM and argues that it operated like a special forces outfit that acted against separatism and Western imperialist expansionism.⁵³ In fact the archives of the Turkish General Staff Military History and Strategic Studies Directorate in Ankara (Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Genelkurmay Askeri Tarih ve Stratejik Etüt Başkanlığı Arşivi) has published numerous documents since 2005 that support Stoddard's conclusion.⁵⁴ For example, according to the 27-volume study of the Turkish Army in World War I, five TM groups were on the Russian-Ottoman front. Yücel Güçlü treats the TM as "somewhat equivalent to the Ottoman special forces, for the period 1914-22."55 Indeed, on the basis of an 8-volume publication of the ATASE (Turkish General Staff Military History Archives), we could conclude that the TM acted on many occasions as the special forces of the empire and was hardly involved in the

deportation of the Armenians. These military reports are important documents for understanding the prevailing conditions of the empire during World War I. Justin McCarthy, a leading scholar who has utilized the Ottoman archives extensively, argues that the "reports of Ottoman soldiers and officials were not political documents or public relations exercises. They were secret internal reports in which responsible men relayed to their governments what they believed to be true." Indeed the military reports challenge the allegations about the TM's role in the relocation and massacres of the Armenians. 57

CONCLUSION

Academic studies on the TM are still very limited, yet this does not mean that its emergence and evolution in the context of the late Ottoman Empire cannot be analyzed through a critical lens that seeks to highlight some theoretical and conceptual issues. This study has brought some important theoretical and conceptual questions to the fore through an analytical perspective on the TM by referring to primary archival documents and secondary sources.

The TM was established just before the outbreak of World War I, with wide-ranging objectives. CUP elites created the TM, and then Enver Paşa and Talat Paşa gave it its final form. Despite their major disagreements on the nature of the organization, these rivals sought to minimize their differences with respect to the TM's operations. Even though the TM was formally a state institution, the CUP Central Committee became the arbitrator in the process of deciding whether the TM would operate under Talat Paşa's Ministry of Interior or Enver Paşa's Ministry of War. When Enver and Talat left the Ottoman Empire after it lost in World War I, they assigned Hüsamettin Ertürk as the sole person responsible for the TM and its documents.

The inability of the TM to cope with the constraints of domestic and external politics makes it necessary to consider the sociopolitical context in which the TM members operated. Its leaders had prior experience in local resistance movements in the Balkans. This informed their cognitive map and their political conduct. The TM was a political arm of the CUP leaders, who represented various ideologies, the most important being Ottomanists, Islamists, and Turkists. All three ideologies aimed to save the state by emphasizing a shared Islamic identity. While the CUP elites instrumentalized these three ideologies, their ideological orientation changed depending on the region and the ongoing power struggles

within the CUP's internal organization. Within this framework the TM should be regarded as a special forces group that acted as an extension of the governing party, which regarded itself to be the guardian of the state.

More critical research is necessary to understand and explain the TM with more concrete historical pieces of evidence. Future research on the TM through theoretical and conceptual lenses is also necessary to establish comparative perspectives with similar organizations in other imperial and contemporary contexts. Through comparative analysis we can understand better why and under what conditions state elites see organizations such as the TM as necessary for the survival of the state when they fear the possibility of its collapse. These theoretical questions are very likely to shed light on the dark areas of late Ottoman historiography by taking this era beyond nationalist paradigms and political controversies.

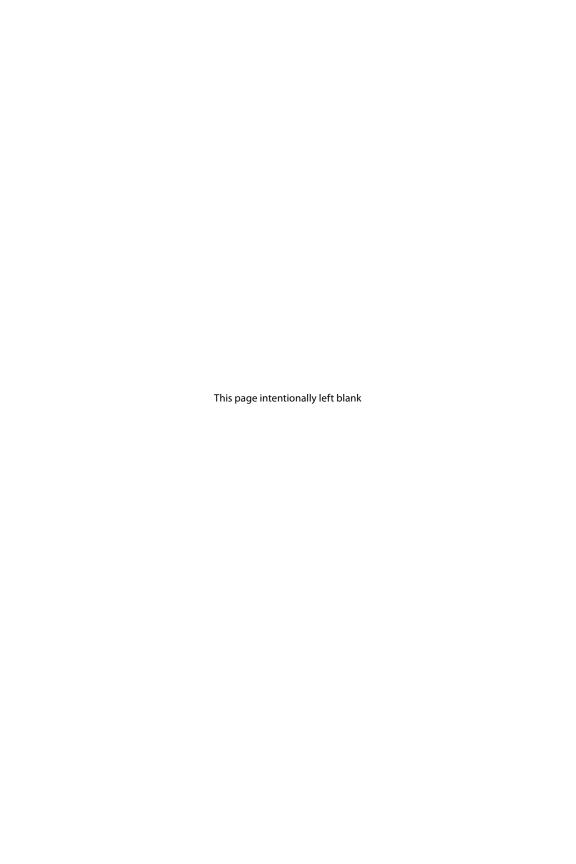
NOTES

I began research on the Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa when I was a visiting scholar at the University of Utah. M. Hakan Yavuz tirelessly worked with me to set the framework of this chapter and read several drafts. This chapter is the outcome of a major book that I am writing together with Professor Yavuz. I would like to give special thanks to Serhun Al for his theoretical insights and questions. I also thank Brad Dennis, İlker Aslantepe, Nihat Ali Özcan, and Ramazan Hakkı Öztan for reading and commenting on earlier versions of this chapter. It was originally published in *Middle East Critique* 23, no. 2 (2014): 157–74.

- Vahakn N. Dadrian, "The Role of the Special Organization in the Armenian Genocide during the First World War," 58-63.
- 2. Guenter Lewy, The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey, 82–88.
- From an interview with Hilmar Kaiser in Emine Kart, "Historian Challenges Politically Motivated 1915 Arguments."
- Polat Safi, "History in the Trench"; and idem, "The Ottoman Special Organization—Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa."
- Stoddard underlines this structure in his analysis of the organization: "The Ottoman Government and the Arabs, 1911 to 1918"; see also Safi, "History in the Trench."
- 6. Safi, "The Ottoman Special Organization," 136.
- 7. Both Stoddard and Safi translate Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa as "Special Organzation."
- 8. Stoddard, "The Ottoman Government and the Arabs," 1.
- 9. See further M. Hakan Yavuz and Peter Sluglett, eds., War and Diplomacy.
- 10. See further Edward J. Erickson, "Armenian Massacres."
- 11. For a detailed study, see Hamit Pehlivanlı, "Osmanlılarda İstihbaratçılık."
- 12. Hamit Pehlivanlı, "Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa," 285-86.
- Mustafa Balcıoğlu, "Kendi Belgeleriyle Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa Yahut Umur-u Şarkiye Dairesi," 24.

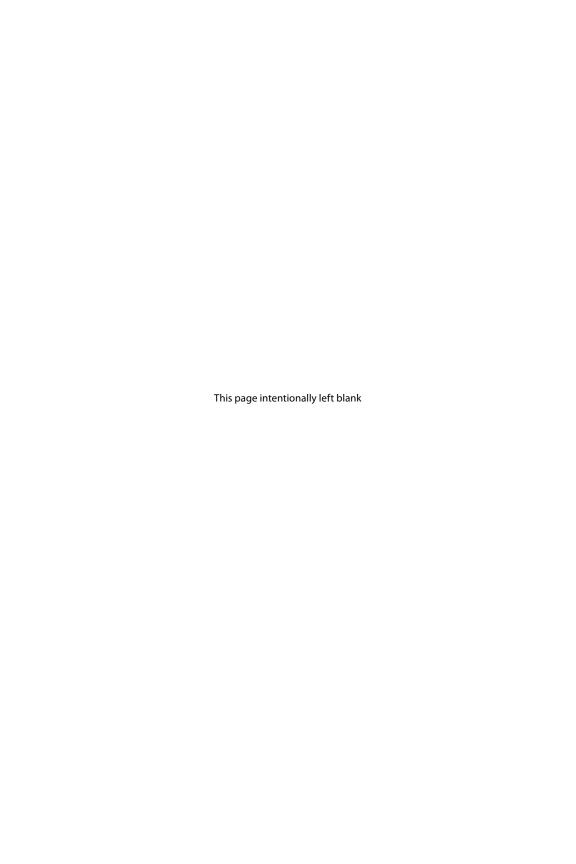
- For further details on the insurgency and counterinsurgency trends after the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–78, see Edward J. Erickson, "Template for Destruction."
- 15. M. Hakan Yavuz, "The Balkan Wars as a Catalyst of Homogenization," 46.
- For further details on the Treaty of Berlin in 1878 and how it affected the Ottoman state and society, see Yavuz and Sluglett, War and Diplomacy.
- 17. Erickson, "Template for Destruction."
- 18. Yavuz, "The Balkan Wars as a Catalyst," 49-50.
- 19. Safi, "The Ottoman Special Organization," 143.
- 20. M. Boas and K. M. Jennings, "Failed States and State Failure," 477.
- 21. M. Hakan Yavuz, "The Politics of Security and the Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa" (manuscript that will be published in 2015).
- 22. Tevfik Çavdar, Türk Demokrasi Tarihi 1839–1950, 94.
- 23. Mustafa Balcıoğlu, *Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa Yahut Umur-i Şarkiye Dairesi*, 46.
- Askeri Tarih ve Stratejik Etüt Başkanlıgı/Turkish General Staff Military History Archives, Ankara (hereafter ATASE), K.1846, D.43, F.79.
- Hamit Pehlivanlı, "Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa," 286.
- Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi/Prime Ministry Ottoman Archive in Istanbul (hereafter BOA), DH. KMS. 35-22/2; BOA DH. İ.UM. 92-2.
- 27. BOA, DH. İ.UM. E-5-/99.
- 28. BOA, DH. ŞFR. 444/9.
- 29. Stoddard, "The Ottoman Government and the Arabs."
- 30. A. Mil, "Umumi Harpte Teşkilât-1 Mahsusa," 6.
- 31. Ali Birinci, "Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa Günleri Ebülhindili Cafer Bey," 48.
- Tarık Zafer Tunaya, Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler, 3:339. In this book Tunaya offers
 preliminary information about the foundation and activities of the TM (339–59).
- 33. ATASE, K.1844, D.78, F.72; ATASE, K.1846, D.43, F.79.
- 34. Orhan Koloğlu, "Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa'dan Milli Emniyet'e Geçiş," 147.
- 35. BOA, DH. ŞFR. 444/27; H. Pehlivanlı, "Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa," 290–91.
- 36. BOA, DH. İ.UM. E-103-44/2.
- 37. BOA, DH. İ.UM. E-5-24.
- 38. BOA, DH. EUM. 2.ŞB, 39-14/29; BOA, DH. EUM. 2.ŞB, 39-14/14; BOA, DH. EUM. 2.ŞB, 39-14/33.
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- 40. Stanford J. Shaw, *The Ottoman Empire in World War I*, 1:422–29.
- 41. Osman Selim Kocahanoğlu, İttihat Terakki'nin Sorgulanması ve Yargılanması.
- 42. *Meclis-i Mebusan Zabıt Cerideleri* [Parliamentary Minutes], 3rd Period, 5th Year of the Assembly, 25.
- 43. Ibid., 115.
- 44. Ibid., 157, 161.
- 45. Cemil Koçak, "Ey Tarihçi Belgen Kadar Konuş!" 173.
- 46. Ibid., 175.
- Vahakn N. Dadrian, "The Documentation of the World War I Armenian Massacres in the Proceedings of the Turkish Military Tribunal," 554.
- 48. Osman Selim Kocahanoğlu, *Divan-ı Harb-i Örfi Muhakemaatı Zabıt Ceridesi Tehcir Yargılamaları*, 28.

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- 50. Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın, Talat Paşa'nın Hatıraları, 119.
- 51. Koçak, "Ey Tarihçi Belgen Kadar Konuş!" 178–89.
- 52. Vahakn N. Dadrian, *The History of the Armenian Genocide*, 236–37; see also idem, "The Role of the Special Organization," 51.
- 53. Stoddard, "The Ottoman Government and the Arabs," 1-2, 52-58.
- 54. Arşiv Belgeleriyle Ermeni Faaliyetleri, 1914–1918.
- 55. Yücel Güçlü, "Will Untapped Ottoman Archives Reshape the Armenian Debate?"
- 56. Justin McCarthy, Conference on the Reality of the Armenian Question, 57.
- 57. Erickson, "Armenian Massacres," 67-75.



PART IV

Armenian-Kurdish and Ottoman-Russian Relations



A Topography of Positions in the Turkish-Armenian Debate

M. Hakan Yavuz

No one sums up the current debate over the description of the events of 1915 as prophetically as John Dewey, who visited Turkey several times to help with the structuring of a new education system there: "The situation in Turkey with respect to Turks, Armenians and Greeks alike meets all the terms of the classic definition of tragedy, the tragedy of fate. A curse has been laid upon all populations and all have moved forward blindly to suffer their doom. It is a tragedy with only victims, not heroes, no matter how heroic individuals may have been.... [T]he fate of the Greeks and Armenians, the tools of nationalistic and imperialistic ambitions of foreign powers, makes one realize how accursed has been the minority population that had the protection of a Christian foreign power."

Today the dispute is still dominated by "the tools of nationalistic and imperialistic ambitions of foreign powers." The debate over how to describe the events of 1915 raises some of the most emotionally charged and politically explosive questions in late Ottoman historiography, as well as among the Turkish and Armenian communities, whose history and sensibilities are closely entangled. It is closely linked to national historiography, collective memory, identity, and the destiny of two nations that are geographically and culturally intertwined. In this chapter I focus on how the Turks and Armenians have framed, selected, silenced, and labeled events to shape their contemporary identities and politics.

Research on late Ottoman Anatolia and the relocation of the Armenian population has been very limited due to restricted access to archives as well as silence and accusation on both sides.² For instance, the archives of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF) in Boston provide limited access to certain scholars.³ In the case of Turkey, the Ottoman

archives, except for the military archives, have only become totally accessible since the 1990s. What has been available in terms of historiography by Ottoman scholars and some Armenian genocide scholarship is very problematic. The works on both sides created a rigid set of political slogans either to dehumanize one another or to create a set of myths through which to draw new boundaries. In this book several scholars seek to address the Armenian issue from legal, historical, and political perspectives. This chapter attempts to locate these studies in the larger context of scholarship on the Turkish and Armenian controversy over the nature of the events of 1915. First, I raise several key questions and then provide my reasons why the concept of genocide is problematic in the efforts to explain the events of 1915. Second, I map out the existing scholarship in terms of the diametrically opposing frameworks, before situating the studies within competing discourses of liberation movement versus Armenian treacherous rebellion.

IS THE TERM "GENOCIDE" USEFUL FOR THE STUDY OF LATE OTTOMAN HISTORY?

The questions in this chapter concentrate on three areas. First, the nature of the debate: is it scholarly, political, or legal? What exactly is the problem that we have been debating for the last forty-five years? Whose debate is it? Why do foreign parliaments pass resolutions that call for Turkey to recognize the events of 1915 as genocide? How do terms such as "Islamophobia" and "Orientalism" enter into the debate? Do these external interventions hinder or facilitate the discussion and reconciliation?

Second, framing the debate: why do the Armenian communities insist that the events constitute the first genocide rather than ethnic cleansing, relocation and massacres, or civil war? How useful is it to analyze and understand Armenian-Ottoman relations within the context of genocide? To what extent is the term "genocide" useful to build bridges of a shared understanding between these two nations?

Third, the event itself: what did happen before and during World War I between the Armenians and the Ottoman state? How did the Armenian revolutionary organizations and insurgency shape the thinking of the Ottoman bureaucrats about the final aim of the Armenians? Did the Ottoman state exaggerate the threat and overreact? How and why did the most loyal nation get framed as the enemy? Why do genocide theses totally ignore the Armenian revolutionary organizations' violent tactics, ideology, and close collaborations with Russia? What is the connection

between intention and outcome when we want to understand the painful history of the Armenians and Ottomans? Moreover, what type of evidence (archival, oral history, memories, collective remembering, missionary reports, or court indictments) is important to the argument?

GENOCIDE SCHOLARSHIP VS. HISTORIOGRAPHY

Paul Boghossian, a professor of philosophy at New York University, prophetically concludes that: "we should be careful not to do something that many in the Armenian community seem to want to do—and that is to frame the issue that divides them from the Turkish government as resting exclusively on the applicability of this special label 'genocide' to what happened in 1915. The word is too fragile a reed to sustain so much weight." Indeed, there are many ways of recognizing the sufferings of Armenians by building a shared understanding of the events of 1915. William A. Schabas, the most prominent legal scholar of the crime of genocide, concurs with Boghossian that "it is unnecessary to use a single word to frame the debate about the persecution and destruction of the Armenian people." Schabas echoes the debate over Darfur by quoting former president of the United States Jimmy Carter, who said: "the atrocities were horrible but I don't think it qualifies to be called genocide." Those who say that some atrocities—as horrible as they might be—cannot be described as genocide are dismissed as deniers. The scholars who intentionally seek to apply the term even reject the legal definition in toto and develop their own definitions outside of the wording used in the United Nations Convention on Genocide.

"Genocide" is a legal term in international criminal law. In order to conclude whether there is genocide, two aspects of the definition must be established: (1) actual physical killing of members of an ethnic, religious, racial, or national group; and (2) an intention to destroy, in whole or in part, such a group. It is up to the competent court to determine whether the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) government had the intent to destroy Armenians "as such" or whether the loss of life, regardless of how great the number, was an unanticipated result of the government's aim to remove a perceived security threat or to create a more secure environment. Even without a "smoking gun" (an official order to destroy the Armenians), a powerful accumulation of archival and personal testimonies indicates ad hoc killings of some ethnic Armenians in some cities or during the process of relocation. This inhumane relocation resulted in the ethnic cleansing of the Armenian communities from their ancestral lands.

A clear and immediate difficulty with the concept of genocide is that it is a legal term and not conducive to historical inquiry. Donald Bloxham, a leading scholar with a nuanced argument on the Armenian case, aptly contends that genocide "is more a legal term than a historical one, designed for the ex post facto judgments of the courtroom rather than the historian's attempt to understand events as they develop." In fact the term "genocide" seeks to moralize a conflict, constantly searching for a victim and a victimizer: it is always in search of intent and functions as a prosecutor, ignoring the internal diversity of these communities or movements, causal connections, and the role of contingency and human agency. This genocide debate between victim and victimizer is a moral discussion, not a historical one. In order to understand the chains of events and the role of human agency, we need to de-moralize the issue and seek to understand what happened and why. In other words, the events, actors, and context of the past all need to be examined "teleologically—a retrospective projection" to prove the criminality of "perpetrators."8

The main task of the historian is to explain and understand what took place in past events on the basis of available historical material, while the task of a genocide scholar is to establish, like a lawyer or prosecutor using evidence, whether what took place can or cannot be categorized as genocide. The goal of understanding and explaining the past by analyzing the body of evidence is thus completely different from the task of proving. Unfortunately, many genocide scholars work as prosecutors to establish the case by attempting to prove that what took place was the megacrime of all crimes: genocide. In recent years the International Association of Genocide Scholars (IAGS) has begun to determine cases of genocide on the basis of "voting." In fact the IAGS has labeled almost every mass atrocity as genocide. Agreeing with this overextended definition of genocide results in a long catalog of genocides in the Balkans, Caucasus, Africa, Asia, and Americas.

The scholars of genocide and historians have very different missions and methodologies and should not confuse their tasks. How a historian thinks and writes is different from the methods of a legal scholar who seeks to prove a case to be genocide. A legal scholar is expected to apply the law to the case. Those who operate within a legal frame tend to *judge*, whereas the task of historians is to *understand* without taking sides. The task of the historian is to identify the conditions and the web of interactions through which mass atrocities take place. The historian seeks to explore the causal connections without the burden of having to determine who was a victim and who was a perpetrator.

Those who question the application of the term "genocide" to the events of 1915 are frequently labeled as "deniers." They are silenced or delegitimized as a result of this weighty stigma, rendering the framework of genocide a conversation-stopper. When William Schabas, the most prominent legal authority on the crime of genocide, refused to apply the term "genocide" to the massacres at Srebrenica, he was denounced as "genocide denier." Baskın Oran, a political activist who criticizes the official Turkish historiography, argues that the reason for the rigid Turkish position is the term "genocide." Oran calls on Armenians not to catalogue the events of 1915 under this term. In fact in recent years it has been increasingly difficult to find intellectual space to discuss the two versions of the past. For instance, a series of conferences organized by the Workshop on Armenian and Turkish Scholarships (WATS) refused to invite any scholars who were unwilling to examine the events within the framework of genocide. Thus the edited book that emerged from a series of conferences has no single paper that challenges the Armenian version of the history. 11 Consequently, the events that shape the relations between the Armenians and the Ottoman state are catalogued as genocide, removed from historical inquiry, and transformed into a moral concept. 12 Yet this edited book, which emerged out of efforts to formulate a historical view that is inclusive of many perspectives, offers two broad conclusions. First, the CUP had no developed plan or intent to "destroy" the Armenians before the war. The war itself was the most decisive factor in the cumulative radicalization of the CUP government. Second, the killings and destruction of the Armenian communities were the by-product of the inept Ottoman bureaucracy, widespread hunger, and contagious diseases during the relocations, not an ideologically formed policy of genocide.13

The act of insisting that the events of 1915 should be called the "Armenian Genocide" rather than "massacres and deportations" or "religious civil war" not only leads to a dichotomous historiography but also removes any possibility of shared space to understand what happened. At the heart of the current debate between the two competing historiographies is the labeling of the events of 1915. The politics of framing have been the major obstacle in the way of understanding what happened and how it happened. This debate, along with the Armenian occupation of the Karabakh region, hinders the establishment of diplomatic relations between the republics of Turkey and Armenia. The concept of genocide does not help to build bridges but instead derails such efforts by moralizing century-old events and ignores the internal diversity of the Ottoman

Muslim and Armenian communities. It creates victims and victimizers then assigns all agency to the Ottoman victimizers and constructs a blameless victim, removing agency from the Armenians.

The crime of genocide by definition focuses on the specific intent of genocide. The Armenian historiography tries to derive intent on the basis of the consequence: removal of the Armenian communities from Anatolia. It blames the Turks for the outcome and labels it genocide. This labeling removes the possibility of explaining why and how these series of events took place. Armenian historiography seeks to prove that the massacres and relocations were organized and planned by the Ottoman government. In recent years this highly politicized historiography also has prevented many scholars from examining these events in their work.

Still, the prominent historians of the Ottoman Empire look beyond the term "genocide" and ask the following questions. Why did the Ottoman government decide to deport the Armenians? How and why did some of these relocations morph into massacres? Neither Armenian nor Turkish scholars avoid nationalist ideology to reimagine what took place between the two communities. The Armenian struggle to get the Turks and the world to recognize their suffering as genocide is the main mission of the genocide scholars. Due to this unyielding interest in insisting on the label "genocide," scholars of genocide and most Armenian scholars manipulate the entire history between the Ottoman state and its diverse Armenian communities to show that all interactions led to genocide. This teleological reading dominates Armenian historiography. Thus the attempt to prove the existence of genocide determines all relations before and after the events of 1915. This chapter, in contrast, seeks to bring the study of Ottoman-Armenian relations back into the historical domain by stressing that the term "genocide" is a legal one and that its application to the Armenian case requires more study by historians.

FRAMEWORKS OF STUDY: COMPETING EPISTEMIC COMMUNITIES

Several competing approaches attempt to explain the tragic events and relocations of the Armenian communities. There are two different epistemic communities of views on how to decipher the events of 1915. The first group of scholars agrees that the consequences of the events constitute genocide: the Turks are perpetrators and the Armenians are blameless victims. After agreeing that the events of 1915 were indeed genocide and that the Turks were the perpetrators, they seek to build intent on the

basis of their own conclusion. Within the same epistemic community, however, they provide diverse, even contradictory causal explanations. Their suggested causes vary from Islam to the autocratic structure of the Ottoman state to Turkish nationalism to the leadership of the CUP. They all assign agency to the Ottoman Turks and treat the Armenians as the receivers of the consequences of Ottoman action, while hardly questioning the activities of the Armenians' revolutionary organizations and their close alliance with the occupying foreign forces, especially with Russia and France. In other words, this group of scholars explains the events from the perspective of the experiences of the Armenians. They also agree that the Republic of Turkey should recognize the events as genocide and respond to its legal implications. The difficulty with this group of scholars is that their initial question (why did the Turks intend to destroy the Armenians as such?) is very problematic. They focus on the Ottoman leaders as perpetrators and never seek to understand the violent actions of the Armenian volunteer units and revolutionary political parties that led to the shift of perception, which in turn led to the viewpoint of the Armenians as the enemy.

The second epistemic community also has certain common assumptions: Armenians were actors on their own behalf, just as the CUP leaders were, and the events of 1915 must be understood within an interactive framework between the Armenian insurgency activities and the Ottoman counterinsurgency policies that is embedded in the imperialist rivalry of major European powers. These scholars also insist that the term "genocide" does not encourage objective inquiry and seeks to divide the study between the victims and perpetrators. They disagree over the causes and motives of the events. Some treat the events as communal massacres (kital), some treat them as unintended consequences of the ineffective state to restore security, while still others read the events as killings by the enraged CUP leaders. They offer different cause-and-effect patterns. These scholars focus on the role of major powers, de-emphasizing the capacity of the Ottoman state and the Armenian organizations and the way in which they influenced each other's perceptions and the process of "otherizing."

EPISTEMIC COMMUNITY I: GENOCIDE FRAMEWORK

Even scholars who regularly issue the verdict of genocide against the Turks disagree on the actual date of killings, the role of hatred-based ideology (either Islamism or Turkish nationalism) against Armenians,

whether the activity was planned or evolved in response to failed Ottoman strategies on the war fronts, and the role of major European powers. This group of scholars offers four competing causes to explain the outcome of the relocation: religion (the Islamic conception of *dhimmi*, the second-class status of Christians and Jews); nationalism (the claim that racist ideology governs Turkish nationalism and the logic of creating a homogeneous homeland for the Turks and a larger Turkic empire by rooting out the Armenians who were blocking the union); the authoritarian and theocratic Ottoman state structure; and the CUP leadership's vengeance-oriented policies after the catastrophic defeat of the Balkan Wars of 1912–13.

Those who insist on religion and nationalism defend the premeditation thesis, which stipulates that the massacres were planned and organized by the state. Those scholars argue that the destruction of the Ottoman Armenian communities was the implementation of a long and secret plan of the Ottoman state that had started either in the 1890s, well before 1908, or in 1912. Several competing dates are offered as the starting date of the Armenian massacres. One argument rejects contingency and the war as accounting for genocide; instead it assesses the primary cause for the destruction of the Anatolian Armenian community to be the Islamic conception of dhimmi, Turkish nationalism, and the goal of creating pan-Turkic unity, the very tradition of the Ottoman state. This thesis argues that World War I provided the expected opportunity or pretext to create a homogenized "Turkish-only" or Muslim homeland by rooting out the Christian communities. The premeditation thesis claims that the CUP displayed the intent to destroy the Armenian community according to secret plans. These scholars stress either the second-class status of Armenians within the context of the Islamic concept of dhimmi or Turkish nationalism as carrying the seeds of destruction.

The leading advocates of this thesis are Vahakn Dadrian, Taner Akçam, and Peter Balakian. ¹⁴ Dadrian, the doyen of Armenian genocide scholarship, was educated in Germany and the United States and taught for many years until he was dismissed from his university professorship; he identifies Islam (and in recent years also Turkish nationalism) as a primary cause of the genocide. ¹⁵ Malcolm Yapp, who reviewed *The History of the Armenian Genocide*, argues that Dadrian's

approach is not that of an historian trying to find out what happened and why but of a lawyer assembling the case for the prosecution in an adversarial system. What he wants are admissions of guilt from the defendants, first Germany as the easier target and then Turkey. What is missing is any adequate recognition of the circumstances in which these events took place: the surge of Armenian nationalism, the ambitions of Russia, the fears of the Ottomans, and the panic and indiscipline of war. The 1915 massacres took place when the Ottomans were being driven back by the Russians (supported by many Armenians) in the east and were being threatened by the operations in the Dardanelles in the west. Dadrian is so obsessed by his theory of the long plan that he too often overlooks the elements of the contingent. ¹⁶

In Warrant for Genocide Dadrian essentializes the conflict as ancient hatred between the Turks and Armenians, arguing that the Ottoman state was an Islamic state and that Islam by nature does not tolerate political equality of the followers of different religions, which was required by the pressure of the Great Powers after the Tanzimat of 1839. Furthermore, the late nineteenth century reforms were incompatible with Islam, and this incompatibility led to the genocide. ¹⁷ Islam, as Dadrian understands it, denies political equality among Christians and Muslims. In her review Mary Schaeffer Conroy argues that

this book, while including thoughtful analysis on the possibility of the massacres and some interesting insights, relies too much on theory and educated guesses and too little on facts or Turkish archival sources. It thus does not allow satisfactory conclusions about the extent of the massacres or the motivation and culpability of the Turks with regard to them.... However, the most egregious flaws in this book are its polemical tone, its sketchiness, and its failure to use Turkish archival sources. Therefore, while the book delivers intriguing insights into Ottoman-Kurdish relations and the views of individual Turkish statesmen regarding Armenians, and while it suggests convincing theories for Turkish massacres of Armenians, it does not convincingly document these theories. It is thus unsatisfying as a whole. This book is more a work of journalism than solid history and is not recommended.¹⁸

From Dadrian's perspective, the history of Armenians under the Muslim Ottoman rule is a story of captivity, repression, and a series of genocidal massacres in the nineteenth century. He explains this shift from suppression to genocidal massacres in terms of the Armenian demand

for political equality and the Islamic state's reaction to these demands. Dadrian treats the massacre during the Sultan Abdülhamid II period as "a prelude to, if not a rehearsal for, the World War I genocide." His analysis is based mostly on ideational factors such as Islamism or Turkish nationalism and hardly takes structural factors into account to understand why and how the state bureaucracy reacted. Moreover, this essentialist approach utilizes the Orientalist images and discourses about the "terrible Turk" to construct a genocidal Turk. ²⁰

By stressing the shifting power relations among different religious communities in Anatolia, Dadrian ignores the internal power struggle and transformation within the Armenian community. He defines himself as a genocide scholar, so he believes that his task is to prove the genocidal intent of the Turks on the basis of the result. In this process he construes a purely dichotomous "Muslim versus Armenian" community locked in an endless conflict. A closer analysis indicates that Dadrian's ideational argument misread the secular nature of the Ottoman polity. The Ottoman Empire was a Muslim empire but was not a theocracy. Moreover, Islam is not fixed and is open to different interpretations. To reduce the 600-year-long history between the Armenian communities and the Ottoman state to captivity, repression, and genocide is a political attempt to dehumanize Islam in general and the Turks in particular. This anachronistic reading of the past to prove the genocidal intent is very problematic. From Dadrian's perspective, genocide was inevitable because Islam was rigid and did not accept political equality for religious minorities. To argue that Islamic theology does not allow diversity misreads the nature of the Ottoman Empire: it was always ethnically and religiously heterogeneous and institutionalized this diversity via the millet system. Indeed Dadrian's presentation of the relocations of Armenian Christian communities from eastern Anatolia by dehumanizing Islam might be a powerful argument to the public imagination, but it is an essentialist and rude form of Orientalism.

The Turkish Nationalism Framework

Another dominant approach seeks to explain the relocation of these communities as a planned project of the Young Turks, who acted in accordance with their nationalistic ideas. According to this group of scholars, Turkish nationalism was racist, fascist, militaristic, and braided with Islamic ideas of jihad. Richard G. Hovannisian, the leading figure in Armenian nationalist historiography, argues that it was Turkish nationalism that dehumanized the Armenians as disloyal and treacherous and that

this dehumanization in turn caused the destruction of Armenian communities.²¹ In his second edited volume he and other contributors stress the militaristic nature of Turkish nationalist ideology.²² Hovannisian's third edited volume also comes up with a set of diverse reasons to explain the Armenian genocide.²³ Turkish nationalism and the despotic nature of the Ottoman state again become the primary causes of genocide in this volume. This ideational explanation is flawed. It seeks to explain conduct on the basis of ideological commitment and ignores the sociopolitical context. A better explanation requires the integration of ideas, social conditions, and the interactive relationship between agency and structural context.

When considering the series of events to be genocide, scholars need to find genocidal intent and by doing so become prosecutors who indict the perpetrator. But considering the events only from the perspective of the "victim" leads to a limited reading. This perspective has a number of problems.²⁴ It does not take the role of Western imperialism or the insurgency tactics of Armenian revolutionary committees into account and ignores the demographic pressure of the relocations of Muslims from the Balkans and the Caucasus. These new refugees and the settled population worked closely with local government policies to deter or contain Armenian insurgency. Moreover, this view ignores the impact of new taxation policies and the penetration of European goods into Ottoman regions at the expense of local crafts. The 1838 trade agreement turned the Christian Armenian merchant into a broker who dominated the local and regional trade. Consequently, this created a rich and visible Armenian business class, in contrast to the progressively worsening economic condition of Muslim communities. These economic conditions helped to heighten religio-ethnic negative views of Armenian Christians. The European intervention on the side of Armenian Christians and their extrajudicial protection by European embassies did not help domestic relations between the two religious groups. Many Muslims started to see their Christian neighbors as disloyal and as a fifth column of imperialism. Finally, if these forces were sufficient to produce the Armenian catastrophe, why did the same political and cultural-structural factors not lead to the killings of Greeks or other similar minorities?

No politically developed and popularized Turkish nationalism existed before or during World War I.²⁵ The primary purpose of the CUP was not to create a new nation but rather to maintain the Ottoman state.²⁶ In other words, rather than claiming that the CUP's policies and actions were informed and guided by Turkish nationalist ideology, it

would be more convincing to treat the conflicting policies of the CUP as ad hoc and pragmatic decisions to cope with emerging problems. They were over, Turkism evolved along with Islamism and Ottomanism. They were mutually inclusive identities to save the state and contain territorial loss. The main purpose was the protection of the state, and the CUP leaders only paid lip service to the nationalist rhetoric, so it would be difficult to see genocide as the result of Turkish nationalist ideology. The protection of the state was, and always remained, the ultimate ethos, the underlying critical sentiment that informed the policies of the CUP. M. Şükrü Hanioğlu argues that the CUP "viewed society from the standpoint of the state and attributed utmost importance to the interests of the state. As [the CUP] saw it, deputies were agents of the state rather than representatives of the people." Indeed the small circle of CUP politicians talked of Turkish nationalism, although it hardly became the guiding principle of the CUP's policies.

A closer reading of the memoirs of Talat Paşa indicates that the central concept in his thinking and action is the concept of the state: neither the Ottoman dynasty nor nationalist ideology played as significant a role as the state itself did. His patriotic duty was to serve and protect the state against the European imperial designs to weaken and partition the Ottoman Empire. In his memoirs Talat argues that "during the war one of the goals was to create a national feeling and deepen this feeling in the soul of the populace." He argues that in every war Muslims became poorer, whereas the non-Muslims of the empire became richer.²⁹ He examines the Armenian demands and actions in the shadow of the past: the way in which Bulgaria became independent with the foreign intervention and ethnic cleansing of Muslims.³⁰ In this regard Talat emphasized two aspects. First, the Armenians wanted to establish an independent state, just like Bulgaria, by carving a large piece of Ottoman land with the help of foreign powers, especially with Russian support. Second, the worsening war conditions and the collaboration of Armenian volunteers with the Russian army forced the Ottoman military to relocate Armenians. ³¹ The CUP remained very loyal to the idea of an empire and acted not because of nationalism but rather in light of the imperial state tradition.

Scholars like Akçam and Balakian typically recycle Dadrian's arguments. Akçam, for example, presents a number of facilitating factors such as the defeat in the Balkan Wars, the suffering and mass deportation of Muslim refugees, the Armenian Reform Project of 1914, and World War I. 32 In his latest book Akçam argues that the Armenian genocide

should be viewed as an outcome of a process. By recycling Bloxham's thesis, Akçam argues that the Armenian genocide has been "the cumulative outcome of a series of increasingly radical decisions, each triggering the next in a cascading sequence of events." ³³

Dadrian, Akçam, and Balakian treat their field of study as no different from a courtroom where they deliver the guilty verdict against genocide perpetrators, setting out to prove that the Ottoman government and the Turks are guilty of committing genocide. This group utilizes the framework of genocide not to understand but rather to issue judgment by imposing the term "genocide" on complex events. This courtroom-centric type of academic activity solely seeks to display the guilt of perpetrators. The research on the causes, process, and consequences of the events of 1915, however, has not been conclusive yet. It is important to expand intellectual space to question existing narratives without dehumanizing any side.

Demographic Engineering

In recent years Uğur Ümit Üngör, Fuat Dündar, and Raymond Kevorkian have argued that the CUP's ideology before the war aimed to create a modern nation-state through Turkification of Anatolia. This approach stresses the process of homogenization rather than nationalism as the cause of the relocation and killings. The CUP, according to these scholars, started to implement its homogenization policy during the Balkan Wars by deporting the Greeks from Anatolia. Kevorkian claims that "the physical destruction of the Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire has, in its turn, a singular feature: it was conceived as a necessary condition for the construction of a Turkish nation state—the supreme objective of the Young Turks." Although Kevorkian treats the "destruction as self-construction," he never explains how the Armenian volunteer units became so threatening that the state regarded the destruction as a drastic security measure for its survival. By arguing that "the troubling resemblance between the Armenian and Young Turk elite, both of whom saw themselves as the bearers of a 'sacred' mission—saving the 'nation," Kevorkian not only mixes the concept of state and nation but does not fully convey the security concerns of the state officials.³⁴ The CUP's fundamental mission was to save the state, not the nation. The Young Turks' policies were motivated by their state-centric thinking and were Ottomanist, whereas the Armenian nationalists were revolutionary and aimed to create a unified and homogeneous nation-state where they were only 25–30 percent of the population. It is this very Armenian project of creating a nation-state with the help of the Allied powers—especially Russia—that scared the CUP leaders as well as ordinary Muslims.

Those who seek to understand the events of 1915 from the perspective of demographic engineering read the history backward and construct an outcome-oriented narrative. They tend to treat the emergence of modern Turkey as an outcome of the ethnic cleansing of Armenians. In other words, they recycle the nation-building literature by stressing the most brutal forms of homogenization as if they were unique to Turkey. This approach treats genocide as an inevitable necessity for all multiethnic and multireligious societies if they want to become a nation-state. Following the logic of scholars who describe the main motive of the CUP leaders as nation-building through homogenization, we could argue that the deaths were not the result of genocidal intent. At the same time, however, their logic also seems to dictate that every mass atrocity is viewed as genocide, which then means general mass murder regardless of intent.

In order to understand the events of 1915 we need to separate them into three analytically separate phases: the process of securitization of the Armenian communities; the decision of relocation from the war zones; and the killings and ethnic cleansing of the Armenians.

The Political and Cultural Functionalist Thesis

Other scholars treat the destruction of the Armenian communities as genocide by outcome but tend to disagree with the essentialist thesis.³⁵ They reject the premeditation argument and develop their own functionalist interpretation. This more nuanced thesis is based on three claims. First, it was an incremental genocide without a single order or plan. Second, the logic of total war converted the war's foreseeable excesses into unintended genocide. Third, the defeats in the Balkans and the anxiety around the collapse of the Ottoman state accelerated the Turkish-Armenian conflict beyond control. The structural explanation focuses on the state actors, the international system, the nature of total war, regime types, revolution, and modernity. The key argument made by this group is based on the ethnicization of the state by the CUP and its decision to create a homogeneous nation. This group offers a more structural-functionalist interpretation that redefines the events of 1915 as an act without lengthy premeditation. Rather than relying on traditional conceptions of dhimmi or Turkish ethnicity, they identify the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the worsening war conditions, the Western imperialist project of taking over the last remaining territories of the Turks,

and the Armenian alliance with invading Russian troops as the primary causes of the destruction of these communities.³⁶ These scholars, who reject the premeditation thesis, argue that the genocide was the outcome of total war and that there was no prior plan or intent to destroy Armenians. They still insist on the genocide claim on the basis of the consequences: what happened to the Armenians is a genocide or genocidal in terms of the result. They argue that the CUP may not have had an ideology of genocide or a clearly articulated plan to destroy the Armenians but had an evolved policy of genocide due to pragmatic and contingent reasons.

Robert Melson, who also insists on structural-political factors as the cause of the genocide, believes that genocide requires three major conditions: the existence of a revolutionary and radical ideology, a revolutionary political organization, and the radicalizing effects of war.³⁷ The successful radical revolutionary system leads to political disequilibrium by creating radicalized and enraged minorities. He argues that those who came to power after the 1908 Young Turk revolution and their ideology were radicalized further under the effect of the Balkan Wars and other wars. This radicalized ideology, in turn, did not conceive Anatolia as the shared homeland of Turks and Armenians. The war conditions created major anxiety about the future of their dictatorial power and the future of their state. Under these conditions the revolutionary vanguard (the CUP) chose to exterminate the Armenian communities. Michael Mann examines the ideological, economic, military, and political conditions under which communal killing takes place. Rather than focusing on a single factor, he examines the toxic mix of these factors to explain mass killing. In his analysis of the Armenian case Mann rejects the premeditation thesis that the CUP government had a long-term genocidal intent. He analyzes the process and causes of the radicalization of the Ottoman policies from Abdülhamid II to the CUP and argues that the toxic mix of economic competition between Muslims and Christians, the emergence of Turkish nationalism, and the capture of power by the CUP led to the genocide. Mann never examines the role of Armenian nationalism, the revolutionary organizations and their violence, or the impact of these activities on the Ottoman bureaucracy. As long as we fall short of understanding the securitization of the Armenian community by the Ottoman state, we cannot fully understand the motives of the Ottoman officials. Although Mann discusses the psychological impact of humiliation and victimization on the CUP leaders as a result of the defeat in the Balkan Wars (1912–13), along with the forced reform project by the major European powers to appoint two foreign inspectors to eastern

Anatolia in 1914, he never considers their political consequences. Moreover, he does not examine the connections between the Russian threat and the Armenian insurgency in eastern Anatolia. Mann summarizes the evolving CUP policies: from "alliance with the Armenians" to "strategically confined deportations" to "violent deportation" to "slid[ing] into a genocidal Plan." He concludes that "this was not as coherent, organized and premeditated a genocide as is usually argued...murderous cleaning is rarely the initial intent of the perpetrators." On the basis of Mann's work we could argue that the CUP had no intent to destroy the Armenians as such and that the changing policies of the state indicate the lack of an organized plan to kill Armenians.

Donald Bloxham offers a more balanced and historicized narrative of the events. He argues that World War I was the most important factor in the annihilation of the Armenians. Yet he also identifies the CUP ideology as instrumental in the exaggeration of the Armenian insurrection and the threat to the state. Furthermore, he takes the view that the nationalist leaders of the Armenian community made poor decisions by paying too much attention to the major European powers and using violence against the Ottoman state. In short, the combination of ideologies, the European intervention, and the war led to the destruction of Armenians. Bloxham's most intriguing argument is that the Ottomans had no well-articulated plan of genocide but that their policies gradually became radicalized. The CUP leaders' policies evolved in response to the challenges they faced: from localized relocation to massacres to genocide in the late spring of 1915. 39 The Turkish military archives have published multivolume books about the insurrection activities and regular attacks by the Armenian revolutionaries against the logistic lines and Muslim population during World War I. According to the intelligence reports of the Ottoman military and civilian authorities, a genuine security threat stemmed from the Armenian revolutionary activities and their close cooperation with Russia, Britain, and France. The Armenian rebellion in Van and the capture of the city by Russian troops affirmed the Ottoman fears of a coordinated operation against their army. The Allies landed at the Dardanelles on April 25, 1915. In May the Russian army along with Armenian volunteers started to move toward Erzurum, and several Armenian militias were caught on Mediterranean shores in the act of gathering anti-Ottoman intelligence. 40 The Ministry of Defense and the Ottoman General Staff, on the basis of the evidence, decided to relocate the Armenians to protect their supply lines and the lines of communication in late April.41

The Agency (Elite) Thesis

In recent years the core argument of the premeditation thesis has been challenged by prominent scholars such as Ronald Grigor Suny, Fuat Dündar, Halil Berktay,⁴² Selim Deringil,⁴³ and Yektan Türkyılmaz.⁴⁴ Their agency-based approaches focus on the role of the decision-making elite and those bureaucrats who carried out orders to eliminate a group of people. Suny, an Armenian political scientist and one of the leading scholars of the Caucasus, argues that the most plausible explanation for the genocide is the role of state elites and emerging modernity. He contends that the genocide was not caused by bottom-up pressure but was engineered by the elite, identifying the role of the CUP elite as critical in the process of killing. Suny does not reject the thesis of the difficult transformation of the imperial-colonial state into a citizen-based polity, the polarization of the ethno-religious boundaries between the Muslim and Christian Armenian communities due to the enrichment of the Armenian community, and the anxiety caused by World War I and the possibility of a final partition of the Ottoman homeland. But this approach fails to explain a number of issues. How did Talat Paşa move from being a man who was known as a close friend of the Armenians to being the key person to remove the Armenian communities? How did he and other CUP leaders become "genocidal," as the Armenian version claims? What factors (if any) explain this transformation? Were there front-line killers of the Armenian deportees? Could mass killing succeed without societal support? This approach disregards the atrocities of the Armenian volunteer units and only focuses on the Ottoman leaders. Scholars who stress the role of the elite argue that the supposed genocide was an outcome of the fear and anxiety that evolved during the war. Relocation was a deliberate elite decision to protect the state and also prevent the Armenian insurgents from collaborating with Russia.

Fuat Dündar, a Kurdish historian, offers an original yet very problematic thesis. He claims that the CUP's main goal was to create a Muslim-Turkish homeland through assimilation and relocation. The CUP's demographic engineering involved first removal of non-Muslims from Anatolia and then assimilation of non-Turks into the imagined Turkish nation. This policy was implemented against Bulgarians, Greek Orthodox (Rums), and then, in May 1915, against Armenians. Dündar aptly argues that the idea of homogenization and the tactics involved were part of the larger nation-building project that the CUP borrowed from the Balkans.

Dündar and Türkyılmaz expand on the role of political entrepreneurs in terms of understanding the relocation decision and killings during World War I. Moreover, they tend to differentiate the massacres during the period of Abdülhamid II from the CUP policies of ethnic cleansing.

As this discussion shows, the opinions of scholars of the genocide camp on the causes and the contingency of the events of 1915 are increasingly diverse. Even scholars who promote the notion that genocide did take place have reached no consensus on what caused the destruction of Armenian communities. They all agree that what took place was genocide, but they offer different explanations. The pro-Armenian scholars assign all agency to the Ottoman leadership and accept the Armenians as passive and blameless victims.

EPISTEMIC COMMUNITY II: NONGENOCIDE NARRATIVES

One of the critical factors in the evolution of nongenocide narratives is the attempt by some political bodies (such as parliaments and the IAGS) to rewrite the history of the 1915 events as genocide. Some scholars of genocide and many in the Armenian diaspora want the Turkish Republic and the rest of the world to recognize what happened to Armenians during the war as the first genocide in the twentieth century. Conversely, the majority of Anatolian Muslims remember in their own collective memory the ethnic cleansing and genocidal massacres at the hands of Orthodox Christian nations and see the 1915 events as self-defense to protect the homeland. 46 The controversy over the tragic events in Anatolia has surfaced at the international level, pressing the European Union to keep Turkey out and the United States Congress to "discipline" Turkey and domesticate its foreign policy. Even though history is made by politicians, they fail to see that it is the task of historians to research, analyze, and write a coherent narrative. Some EU countries have used the controversy to push Turkey into accepting historical responsibility for genocide. A powerful Armenian lobby in the United States has been bringing ever greater pressure to bear in getting the Congress to take a similar stance.⁴⁷ The Turkish Republic for its part has refused to accept such charges or historical guilt and has accused its challengers of ignoring the mass killing of Ottoman Muslims during the same period, pointing to the hypocrisy of refusing to acknowledge their own role in genocidal killings in places like Algeria, Bosnia, and Indo-China.

Gilles Veinstein, a historian of Salonika and the Ottoman Empire, reviewed the evidence in a famous 1993 article in *L'Histoire* and concluded that what took place in 1915 does not constitute genocide. When

Veinstein became a candidate for a professorial position at the Collège de France, he was confronted by a campaign of vilification by members of the Armenian diaspora in France because of his scholarly work, despite support from many historians.⁴⁸

The Nationalist Thesis

A spectrum of interpretations on the events of 1915 exists in Turkey. On the right side is the nationalist Turkish perspective, which views the actions of 1915 as necessary to stop Armenian treachery and protect the homeland. This group includes politicians from secular nationalist parties: the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) of Devlet Bahceli, Labor Party (IP) of Doğu Perinçek, and Republican People's Party (CHP) of Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu. Some scholars take an essentialist view, tending to see the Armenian political elite as a treacherous people who were waiting to seize an opportunity to rebel and stab the beleaguered Ottoman state in the back.⁴⁹ This perspective, which is dominant, also stresses the role of major European powers in the partition of Anatolia. In short, Armenians are viewed as the agent of European imperialist powers seeking to end the Turkish and Muslim presence in Anatolia.⁵⁰

A new and influential scholarly group has emerged within the nationalist camp and has coalesced around Türkiye Günlüğü, one of Turkey's most effective center-right journals. Under the editorial leadership of Mustafa Calık, it stresses the contribution of Armenian communities to Ottoman and Turkish culture; recognizes that many innocent Armenian people suffered during the relocation; regards the relocations as an inevitable response to the insurgency and destructive activities of the Armenian volunteers; treats the talk of genocide as an extension of the Sèvres mentality and a political tool to shame the entire Turkish-Muslim nation, refusing to consider it a debate; and emphasizes the Armenian volunteer units' acts of brutality and ruthless occupation of Karabakh to indicate the violent capacity of the ARF.⁵¹ The main importance of this group is that it consists mostly of historians, political scientists, and some psychologists (such as Erol Göka) who spring from the frontier cities of Anatolia. They reflect the dominant collective memory of the events of 1915. Çalık, who is from the Bayburt region and fully cognizant of the mass atrocities carried out by the pro-Russian Armenian militia groups, organizes regular lectures and workshops and publishes books.

The nationalist perspective homogenizes the Armenians and treats the ARF leaders as opportunistic people who rebelled against the state with the help of imperialist powers, especially Russia.⁵² This account of events ignores the historically relatively good relations between the Ottoman state and the Armenians. Moreover, it fails to consider the oppression of Armenians and the constant land-grab of Armenian farmers' lands by the Kurds and some Circassians. ⁵³ The Armenians, just like most Anatolian peasants, were repressed by heavy taxation and lawlessness. Finally, this perspective also ignores the close cooperation between the CUP and the ARF from 1908 to 1913 and the ideological diversity within the Armenian political parties.

The National Security/Necessity Thesis

Many Ottoman historians treat the decision to relocate the Armenian population as a security measure to stop them from collaborating with the Russian enemy and also as a means for protecting the civilian population. Herick-son, Stanford Shaw, Edward J. Erickson, Andrew Mango, Ilber Ortaylı, Norman Stone, Jeremy Salt, Kemal Çiçek, and Yücel Güçlü all conclude that what took place was not a genocide but rather a set of relocations, which were necessitated by pressing national security needs to contain an Armenian insurgency that threatened to destroy the state in alliance with invading Russian troops. They all agree that the relocation orders were not fully implemented and that they indeed took a horribly wrong turn.

This group of scholars offers several reasons for the decision to relocate: the Armenian volunteer units were collaborating with the occupying Russian troops; Armenian nationalism was secessionist, so the Ottoman bureaucracy came to the conclusion that the 1914 reform decision was an attempt to create an independent Armenia; and the Armenian militias were provoking the Ottoman troops to attack them so that they could solicit external European support.⁵⁶ These scholars argue that the relocation was a temporary security solution to the problem: many innocent Armenians died because of a failed state, the lack of necessary health care and transportation, and Kurdish tribal revenge. Edward Erickson carried out extensive research to examine the nature of the Armenian insurrection and its impact on the security of the Ottoman state. He is the first historian to examine how these insurrections shaped the perception of the security of the state and also helped to "securitize" the Armenian community. Guenter Lewy, a leading scholar of comparative genocide, argues that the Armenian insurgency and its collaboration with the Russians provoked the CUP to take extreme measures, which resulted in the relocations and major loss of life among the Armenian community.⁵⁷ Some scholars claim that the CUP leadership was gradually radicalized

in response to Armenian maximalist demands as early as 1914, when the major European powers imposed a reform project on eastern Anatolia under two European inspectors.⁵⁸

The Kiyim (Massacres) Thesis

Some Turkish historians, including Murat Belge, Fikret Adanır, and Baskın Oran, rely on the agency and contingency approach by stressing the role of the CUP leaders and their dictatorial ideology. Belge argues that the diaspora "should give up the term genocide." ⁵⁹ He considers the events of 1915 to be a series of massacres (*kıyım*) by the nationalistic CUP. Although they resulted in major loss of life for the Armenians, they cannot be described as genocide. This group of intellectuals has major problems with the nationalist discourse in Turkey, is very antistatist, and uses the Armenian issue to delegitimize domestic enemies by calling the events of the 1915 genocidal, if not genocide.

For instance, Adanır, a leading historian of Ottoman Macedonia, calls the events of 1915 genocide in an interview but also argues that the Turkish state should never recognize them as such because they were not genocide in legal terms. He occasionally uses the term "genocide" but also contends that the CUP had neither the intent nor an ideology to destroy the Armenian communities. After arguing that "I use 'genocide' in terms of punishing a collective group" and also "in terms of historical responsibility," he rejects the word in its legal meaning: "I do not think one can prove the intent [kasit] because no document exists that calls for the killing of Armenians." The most critical part is where Adanır claims that "the establishment of the Turkish Republic became a possibility with the elimination of the prospect of creating an independent Armenia in Anatolia. We established the current Republic by eliminating this alternative." Adanır contends that the CUP made a big mistake and is fully responsible for the suffering of innocent Armenians who had nothing to do with the events but were all punished and suffered the consequences of the Ottoman decision. "We should openly apologize for what happened to these people. Then we should tell the Armenians that there was a context in which these events took place. Why did the Ottomans not do this 100 years ago but did it in 1915? Thus there are reasons, such as the Armenian desire to establish a state and also Armenian terrorism that resulted in the suffering of Muslims." Adanır accepts the security threat and that the provocation tactics of the revolutionary Armenian organizations were intended to evoke intervention by the major European powers. He contends that the mentalities of the CUP and the Armenian nationalists

were very similar: "both groups believed in social Darwinism: that is, that might will win and might is also right and if I do not kill you, you will kill me." Adanır also argues that the Armenian nationalists, just like the CUP, defended homogenization. 60

Oran, a maverick political activist, argues that the reason for the nationalist and rigid position of many Turks is the outcome of "nationalism, illiteracy, the fear that the Armenians would demand territory or compensation. Moreover, this rigid position is a reaction to the killings of Turkish diplomats and the attempts of the Armenian diaspora to compare Turkey with Nazi Germany." Oran, who is not a historian and offers more opinions than information about the period, claims that the "Kurds agreed to support the government of Ankara during the war of independence because the Kurds did not want Armenians to return." He prefers the term "ethnic cleansing" and argues that the CUP carried this out. But he vehemently rejects the use of "genocide," because "this term is the main reason why Turkey refuses to confront what took place in 1915."

The Islamist Thesis: Not Genocide But Kıtal

The interpretation in Islamist historiography has been shaped by poet Necip Fazıl Kısakürek, popular historian Kadir Mısırlıoğlu, 62 and self-made historian Mustafa Armağan, who regularly writes in the daily Zaman on historical issues. Their framework of understanding is informed by their sympathy with Sultan Abdülhamid II, their admiration for the Ottoman state, and their dislike of the Young Turks and their positivist secularist ideology. Samiha Ayverdi, a leading conservative woman intellectual, offers the most nuanced explanation of the Ottoman-Armenian relations by stressing the role of European powers and diffusion of nationalist ideology into the Ottoman empire. 63 They all adore Abdülhamid II and his pan-Islamist foreign policy and Islamist policy inside the empire. Thus the contemporary Islamist understanding of the Armenian issue, including among the leadership of the Justice and Development Party, is filtered through Abdülhamid II's perspective on the Armenian issue: "For some time there have been attempts to draw the boundaries of Armenia. However, they ignore the fact that [the areas] where Armenians reside are majority Muslim regions. There are no signs and symbols to call these regions Armenia. What they want under the guise of reform is to establish an Armenian state. This is absolutely not possible."64

Most Turks believe that the Armenian revolutionary organizations were seeking to establish an independent state just as the Balkan nations did. They also agree that the Armenian leadership allied itself with the "enemy" (Russia and also France) against the Ottoman forces. Yet the

Islamists do not see much difference between the CUP and the revolutionary Armenian nationalist parties such as the ARF. They regard both as cetes (irregular fighters for a cause) and their politics as *cetecilik* (politics through irregular means). They argue that "two committees" (the CUP and the ARF) sought to kill Abdülhamid II and that both attempted, occasionally by collaboration, to destroy the empire. 65 Thus Islamists' dislike for the CUP does not necessarily translate into sympathy for the Armenians. On the contrary, they regard the Armenians as the tool of European Christian powers in an attempt to destroy the "Muslim" empire and the Muslim presence in Anatolia. One of the most populist Islamist historians is Mustafa Armağan, who argues that "as far as the issue of Armenian relocation [Ermeni tehciri] is concerned, both sides died due to the war and there was no intent of genocide.... There was no such an order to carry out genocide. However, it is a fact that during the relocation some irregulars attacked the convoys and massacred the people. This has nothing to do with the Ottoman government."66

Islamists look at the collaboration between the CUP and the Armenian revolutionary organizations and contend that they were both inspired by the same European ideological roots of revolutionary nationalism and social Darwinism. Moreover, both the CUP and the Armenian political parties aimed to create a homogenous nation-state. The Armenians lost the conflict. In short, this perspective views the removal of the Armenian communities as being the result of two conflicting secular nationalistic ideologies, with the Armenians supported by the European Christians.

These scholars insist that the events of 1915 cannot be regarded as genocide but were rather a nationalist struggle of self-defense and large-scale communal violence (kital); there was no intent to destroy the Armenians because of their nationality or religion but instead an attempt to remove an apparent security threat against the Muslim presence. Some non-Muslim communities relocated just before and during the war due to the security concerns of the state. What took place during the war was intercommunal violence between the two indigenous populations of the regions: Kurds and Armenians.

CONCLUSION

None of the series of ethno-religious and nationalist movements within the Ottoman Empire turned out as bloody as the Armenian case. Historians of this era face the daunting task of explaining why this was the bloodiest interaction between the collapsing empire and the secessionist Armenian nationalist groups. One of the critical factors that separated the Armenians from other ethnic groups was that they were not the majority in any Ottoman province; they had no overlap between population and territory. This minority status turned the Armenian nationalist movement outward, reaching for support from the Great Powers. It grew especially dependent on Russia. Moreover, it was not an Istanbul-based Armenian Church or cultural elite but rather the local middle class in Anatolia that took charge of the movement. Finally, the timing of the Armenian insurgency movement was different: it overlapped with World War I and emerged during the collapse of the Ottoman state. These factors—no clear majority-dominated territory, an aggressive leadership, and timing—worsened the situation. We still need a balanced historiography that does not focus on the year 1915 but rather analyzes the long-term sociopolitical interactions and radicalization of the Armenian and Ottoman revolutionary organizations.

In recent years the scholars in each epistemic community have crossed the historiographic boundaries to start a conversation over the causes, processes, and consequences of the events. This ongoing conversation within and across the epistemic communities already has developed a shared concern of understanding the multifaceted relationship between the Armenian communities and the different layers of the Ottoman state and society, focusing on some key questions. How is the work of a historian different from that of a genocide scholar in understanding and explaining the events of 1915? Does contextualization lead to the rationalization of the massacres of the Armenians? Was the outcome of the events an inevitable result of the imperial rivalry? What was the role of human agency (political choices of the CUP leaders)? Conversation over this set of questions may not create a common understanding over the causes and the outcome of the events, but it would humanize the discussion.

NOTES

An earlier version of this article was published in *Middle East Critique* 20, no. 3 (2011): 231–52.

- 1. John Dewey, "The Turkish Tragedy," 268–69.
- 2. Michael Gwynne Dyer, "Turkish 'Falsifiers." Although some scholars use "deportation" rather than "relocation," I prefer to use the term "relocation," because deportation means the removal of aliens who enter the country unlawfully or forced removal of populations to another country. The Ottoman Armenians were an indigenous population of Anatolia, were not alien, and were removed to different provinces within the borders of the empire.

- In addition to the ARF archives, which are kept in the Hairenik Association building, Watertown, Massachusetts, the Zoryan Institute, which was established to promote the genocide thesis, has been collecting Armenians' private papers related to the events of 1915.
- 4. For the best summary of the two competing historiographies, see Guenter Lewy, *The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey*.
- 5. For the debate over the difficulty of using "genocide" to analyze the events of 1915, see Paul Boghossian, "The Concept of Genocide," *Journal of Genocide Research* 12, nos. 1–2 (2010): 69–80; and the response to Boghossian by William Schabas, "Commentary on Paul Boghossian," 91–99.
- 6. All quotations from Schabas, "Commentary on Paul Boghossian," 95.
- 7. For more on the CUP, see Feroz Ahmad, The Young Turks.
- Donald Bloxham, "The First World War and the Development of the Armenian Genocide," 275.
- 9. In 1997 the IAGS passed a resolution that the events of 1915 constitute a genocide. In almost every scholarly debate over the events of 1915 a group of Armenian scholars or members of the community would distribute this resolution. In other words this attempt to end the scholarly inquiry through voting is very unscholarly. In effect the official journal of the IAGS, Genocide and Prevention: An International Journal, is funded by the Zoryan Institute. For more on the IAGS, see http://www.genocidescholars.org/.
- 10. Paul Mojzes, Balkan Genocides.
- Ronald Grigor Suny, Fatma Müge Göcek, and Norman M. Naimark, eds., A Question of Genocide.
- 12. Fatma Müge Göcek argues that "the term genocide has become an increasingly politicized term; it is so politicized at this point that I think it does not foster research and analysis but instead hinders it." However, she still insists that "what happened in 1915 certainly fits the definition of genocide as defined by the 1948 United Nations convention." See the interview with Göcek at http://gibrahayer .blogspot.com/2006/01/interview-with-dr-fatma-muge-gocek.html.
- 13. For a summary of the current literature, see Robert F. Melson, "Recent Developments in the Study of the Armenian Genocide," 314–15.
- 14. This camp also includes Richard Hovannisian and Fuat Dündar, who insist that the CUP had an articulate policy of demographic engineering.
- 15. Vahakn N. Dadrian, *The History of the Armenian Genocide*. See also idem, *Warrant for Genocide*.
- 16. Malcolm Yapp, review in Middle Eastern Studies 32, no. 4 (October 1996): 395-97.
- 17. The supposed genocide discussed here is purported and not affirmed as such by all sides; I prefer not to use "genocide" but rather to say "relocation," "forced evacuation," "eviction," "massacre," or "catastrophe."
- Mary Schaeffer Conroy, review in Social Science Journal 37, no. 3 (July 2000): 481–83.
- 19. Dadrian, Warrant for Genocide, 156.
- 20. M. Hakan Yavuz, "Orientalism, the 'Terrible Turk' and Genocide," *Middle East Critique* 23, no. 2 (2014): 111–26.
- 21. Richard G. Hovannisian, ed., The Armenian Genocide in Perspective.
- 22. Richard D. Hovannisian, ed., The Armenian Genocide.

- 23. Richard D. Hovannisian, ed., Remembrance and Denial.
- 24. Some Armenian scholars offer much more sophisticated arguments on how to understand the events of 1915; see, for example, Ronald Grigor Suny, "Empire and Nation"; and idem, "Religion, Ethnicity, and Nationalism."
- 25. Hasan Kayalı, Arabs and Young Turks, 82–96.
- 26. Erkan Tural, "Devlet ve Toplum Ekseninde," 132, 142.
- 27. See further Michael A. Reynolds, *Shattering Empires*, 140–66.
- 28. M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, Preparation for a Revolution, 190, 311.
- 29. Talat Paşa, Hatıralarım ve Müdafaam, 42. Although there are several modern Turkish versions of the memoirs of Talat Paşa, which were originally written in Ottoman script, the most reliable one was published by Kaynak Yayınları in 2006.
- 30. Ibid., 49.
- 31. Ibid., 70-72.
- 32. Peter Balakian, *The Burning Tigris*; Taner Akçam, *A Shameful Act*. For an excellent review of Akçam's book, see Erman Sahin, "Review Essay: A Scrutiny of Akçam's Version of History and the Armenian Genocide," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 28, no. 2 (2008): 303–19. Although Akçam knows neither Ottoman script nor the dominant literacy discourse of the period, he marshals the Ottoman documents as evidence of genocide.
- 33. Taner Akçam, The Young Turks' Crime against Humanity, 128.
- 34. Raymond Kevorkian, The Armenian Genocide, 1.
- 35. Donald Bloxham, The Great Game of Genocide; Robert F. Melson, "A Theoretical Inquiry into the Armenian Massacres of 1894–1896," Comparative Studies in Society and History 24, no. 1 (1982): 481–509; idem, "Provocation or Nationalism?: A Critical Inquiry into the Armenian Genocide of 1915," in The Armenian Genocide in Perspective, edited by Richard D. Hovannisian, 61–84 (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1986).
- 36. Yektan Türkyılmaz, "Rethinking Genocide," 133, 165, 167–177. Türkyılmaz criticizes the "escalation thesis" and stresses "rupture" more than the process. Yet his argument is also convoluted and sometimes contradictory. By ignoring the role of the Kurds in the radicalization of the Armenian revolutionary committees, he assigns agency to the Ottoman state. However, he presents an excellent analysis of how victim becomes victimizer.
- Robert F. Melson, Revolution and Genocide; see also Michael Mann, Dark Side of Democracy.
- 38. Mann, Dark Side of Democracy, 26.
- 39. Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide*, 69–95.
- 40. For more on the Armenian volunteers, see William E. D. Allen and Paul Muratoff, *Caucasian Battlefields*, 299.
- 41. Edward J. Erickson, "The Armenians and Ottoman Military Policy, 1915," 166.
- 42. Interview with Halil Berktay, "Ermenilere etnik temizlik yapıldı." Berktay, an activist historian with a slim publication record, never wrote any scholarly work on the Armenian issue and hardly worked in the Ottoman archives.
- 43. Selim Deringil is a well-respected scholar of late nineteenth century Ottoman Turkey; see his book *The Well-Protected Domains*. His recent interviews in several Turkish daily newspapers are polemical, however, and do not reflect his distinguished career.

- 44. Türkyılmaz, "Rethinking Genocide." This dissertation utilizes some of the most critical memories of Armenian leaders of World War I. Türkyılmaz's thesis echoes Robert Melson's "provocation thesis" that the Armenian volunteer units provoked the Ottoman response by joining Russia and attacking the Muslim population, especially in and around Van. This became "the proof of 'Armenian disloyalty' to justify its subsequent slaughter of Armenians" (Türkyılmaz, "Rethinking Genocide," 177).
- 45. Fuat Dündar, İttihat ve Terakki'nin Müslümanları İskân Politikası; idem, Modern Turkiye'nin Şifresi. For a review of the second book, see Ayhan Aktar and Abdulhamid Kırmızı, "'Bon pour L'Orient"; Ahmet Efiloğlu, "Fuat Dündar and the Deportation of the Greeks."
- Mustafa Mirzeler, "Narrating the Memories of Ermeni Mezalimi," Middle East Critique 24, no. 1 (2014): 225–40.
- 47. Brendon Cannon, "Politicizing History and Legislating Reality."
- 48. Rene Lamarchand, "Denying the Right to Deny," *International Herald Tribune*, February 23, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/24/opinion/denying-the-right-to-deny.html?_r=0.
- 49. This perspective has several prominent advocates, such as Türkkaya Ataöv, Yusuf Halaçoğlu, Kemal H. Karpat, and Hikmet Özdemir. See, for example, Hikmet Özdemir, ed., *The Armenians in the Late Ottoman Period*; and interviews with Yusuf Halaçoğlu and Kemal Karpat, "Bir Milyon Ermeni 1917'de Kuzeye Göç Etti," *Milliyet*, June 1, 2009. Karpat's simple analysis is based on imagined numbers, and he also puts the total blame on the Armenians. Moreover, he attempts to justify the suffering of Armenians because of the relocation and killings of Muslims in the Balkans. This is a very simplistic way of reading the events. Karpat claims that Armenians were not killed but moved to the Caucasus along with withdrawing Russian armies.
- 50. Under the Swiss antiracism legislation, the act of denying, belittling, or justifying genocide is a crime. When Doğu Perinçek, a leftist activist and scholar, said that "the Armenian 'genocide' is an imperialist plot" at a conference in Switzerland, the Swiss courts found him guilty of racial discrimination by arguing that the Armenian genocide, like the Jewish genocide, was a proven historical fact and that Perinçek was motivated by racist motives, rather than contributing to a scholarly debate, in denying this historically established fact. The Swiss courts found him guilty of being in violation of antiracism legislation. Perinçek took his case to the European Court of Human Rights, which ruled in his favor on the basis that he had exercised his freedom of expression, which is necessary for a democratic and tolerant pluralist society. The court rejected the legal characterization of the 1915 events as "genocide" and indicated that the events are subject to scholarly debate. The government of Switzerland appealed the December 17, 2013, decision overturning the conviction of Perinçek. The court agreed to hear an appeal. For more on the case, see Hüseyin Pazarcı, "Perinçek vs. Switzerland Case."
- Gündüz Aktan, "Devletlerarası Hukuka Göre Ermeni Meselesi"; Nuri Bilgin,
 "Ermeni Soykırım İddiaları ve Tarihin İnşası"; Deniz Bölükbaşı, "Tarihi Gaflet."
- 52. Mehmet Perinçek, who carried out extensive research in Russian archives, concludes that the communal massacres between the Armenians and Muslims were the outcome of the manipulation of "imperialist powers." The Ottoman army and

- Muslim communities, according to Perinçek, used their right to self-defense to protect their life and properties. Mehmet Perinçek, *Armianskii Vopros*; idem, *Rus Devlet Arşivlerinden*; and idem, *Boryan'ın Gözüyle Türk-Ermeni Çatışması*.
- 53. Brad Dennis, "Patterns of Conflict and Violence," 273–301; Garabet K. Moumdjian, "From Millet-i Sadıka to Millet-i Asiya."
- 54. Edward J. Erickson, "Captain Larkin and the Turks"; idem, "The Armenians and Ottoman Military Policy, 1915"; idem, "Armenian Massacres."
- 55. Kemal Çiçek, Ermenilerin Zorunlu Göçü, 1915–1917; Bülent Bakar, Ermeni Tehciri; Yücel Güçlü, Armenians and the Allies in Cilicia, 1914–1923; Justin McCarthy et al., The Armenian Rebellion at Van. Murat Bardakçı, who has the private papers of Talat Paşa, argues that the state "had to defend itself. Every state has the right to protect itself." On the basis of these private papers, Bardakçı concludes that the purpose of the relocation was "to protect the army's logistic and communication lines and protect the civilians who lived in the region. The purpose of Talat Paşa was a temporary relocation of the population": interview with Bardakçı, Radikal, June 6, 2005. Also see George W. Gawrych, "The Culture and Politics of Violence"; Carter Findley, Turkey, Islam, Nationalism, and Modernity, 142–44, 209–11.
- 56. Louise Nalbandian, The Armenian Revolutionary Movement.
- 57. Guenter Lewy, The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey.
- 58. Zekeriya Türkmen, Vilayat-ı Şarkiye.
- 59. Nuriye Akman's interview with Belge, October 2, 2005, available online athttp://www.nuriyeakman.com/node/1582. Murat Belge, Edebiyatta Ermeniler. Belge examines the early Turkish novels and concludes that Turkish literature had no systematic anti-Armenian characters.
- 60. Fikret Adanır, "1915 Hukukı Anlamda Bir Soykırım Değildir."
- 61. Interview with Baskin Oran, Radikal, August 14, 2006.
- 62. Kadir Mısırlıoğlu, *Tarihden Günümüze Ermeni Meselesi ve Zulümler* (Istanbul: Sebil Yayınevi, 2015).
- 63. Samiha Ayverdi, *Turkiye'nin Ermeni Meselesi*. This booklet provides the best summary of the Turkish Muslim conservative understanding of the Armenian issue. Ayverdi, a very influential female conservative Muslim intellectual, wrote this book in response to the killing of Turkish diplomat Bahadir Demir in 1973 in Los Angeles. In the introduction Ayverdi details her sorrow and emotional reaction to the killing and her meeting with the mother of Demir.
- 64. Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi/Prime Ministry Ottoman Archive, Istanbul (BOA), Yıldız Esas E. 31.1727/2, Z. 158, K. 86.
- 65. Mustafa Armağan, "'Kızıl Sultan' ve Ermeniler."
- 66. Mustafa Armağan, "Ermeni Tehciri."

Russian Military Mobilization in the Caucasus before World War I

Mustafa Tanrıverdi

The Russian annexation of Georgia in the early nineteenth century reshuffled the politics of Caucasia in the Russians' favor, enabling them to establish their own military and administrative structures in the region. In the aftermath of the Georgian annexation the Ottomans and the Persians suffered a decline in their political influence over Caucasia, whereas Russia sought to retain its advantageous position in the region by mobilizing military units. The Treaty of Türkmençay in 1828 caused the Qajar withdrawal from the region, followed by the Ottoman withdrawal with the Treaty of Berlin in 1878.¹

After Russia seized control of Georgia in 1801, Gen. Karl von Knorring was assigned to the region with the title of viceroy, instructed to keep the army units in order, especially in Georgia and all over Caucasia. Upon the order of the tsar, Russians started establishing an administration that would be economically self-sufficient and would meet the needs of the Russian army. Tbilisi was chosen as the center of the administration.² Having been stationed in Tbilisi, the Russians found an opportunity to enlarge their military sphere of influence in the region and consequently annexed the Khanates of Baku, Nakhcivan, and Yerevan (Erevan).³

The Russian takeover in Kars, Ardahan, and Batumi (formerly Batum) following the Treaty of Berlin added a new dimension to the Russian dominance in the region. After the Treaty of Berlin Russians compensated for their loss of reputation in the Balkans by establishing full control over Caucasia. The Russian General Staff also sought to recalibrate their plans for the security of the area after having seized control in these three provinces. The British realized that the Russians would grow much stronger in Caucasia thanks to the Treaty of Berlin, so they sent a letter to

the British Embassy of Istanbul by Lord Robert Arthur Talbot Gascoyne-Cecil Salisbury, to convey to the Ottomans that "Batumi should be ceded to the Russians as late as possible." According to the Treaty of Berlin, Batumi was left to the Russians on the condition of it being a free port. Based on the Cyprus Convention of 1878, if Russia were to change the political status of Batumi, the British along with the Ottomans would have the right to intervene militarily. In the aftermath of the death of Alexander II, however, his successor, Alexander III, sought to remove Batumi's status as a free port and instead turn it into a military base. The Russians' political maneuver was mainly motivated by the concerns of a possible alliance between the British and the Ottomans. The Russians estimated that the British-Ottoman alliance would lead to a major war within Caucasia and hence sought to fortify their Asian border with the militarization of Batumi.

RUSSIAN MILITARY SETTLEMENTS IN CAUCASIA

The Russian government, after the annexation of Georgia, aspired to have a solid military settlement in Caucasia. Establishing dominance in the region was a knotty mission, however, because of the geographical constraints and the warrior peoples of the region. Caucasia was within the geopolitical sphere of both Persia and the Ottoman Empire, and hence the Russians aimed to mobilize adequate troops for possible harsh confrontations.

After the Treaty of Berlin the Russians began to develop the region with a military buildup, putting emphasis on both land and naval forces. First, old fortresses were replaced with new ones equipped with modern artillery. Second, massive artillery storage and twelve military outposts were built at the peak of a mountain near Batumi. To ensure sustainable military mobilization, the construction of ten barracks near the military outposts began. Third, the Russians built a railway network 4.2 kilometers long for the dispatch of military equipment between the Port of Batumi and the artillery storage. In this way the railway between Batumi and Tbilisi made Caucasia logistically accessible. 10

A port and a granary in Novorossiisk were built to ensure the dispatch of troops and military equipment to the Caucasus. The Russian minister of public works came to the region to carry out the inspection of the constructions, especially the military road between Novorossiisk and Sohum. The port of Novorossiisk was integral to the dispatch of troops to Tbilisi, Alexandropol, Kars, and Ardahan on the eve of World

War I.¹² To accelerate the transportation of the military combat units to the Caucasus, the Russians gave special emphasis to the completion of the railway from Tbilisi to Poti. Tbilisi was the Russian headquarters for the governance of Caucasia, and its connection to Poti was crucial for the strategic interests of Russia. The railway network was expanded on a large scale, especially after the extension of the railway from Viladikavkaz (Vladikavkaz) to Rostov.¹³

With the goal of extending the railway line all over the Caucasus, Russia commenced the construction of the Borjom railway. It was first intended to extend toward Halcik as the connection point with the Kars railway. However, due to the high construction costs and the possibility of war breaking out, the Russians decided to extend the line to Alexandropol and then to Kars and Sarıkamış. In this way troops could be dispatched from the hinterlands of Russia to the Ottoman border in fourteen days. Russia spent 150 million rubles on the project, which would be the intersection point of the Gori railway and the line between Baku and Petrovsk. Another railway was also constructed to connect the region of Yerevan to the Persian border by Julfa. 14

In addition to the railways Russia also invested in roads. The connection from Akhaltsikhe to the valley of Kura was the major land road for their military interests. In case the railway between Batumi and Tbilisi was intercepted, the construction of an overland road was planned between Akhaltsikhe and Tbilisi. The Russians settled the issue of transportation in Caucasia after the construction of land roads from 1878 to 1914. ¹⁵

The Russian military preparations were mainly geared toward the fortification and construction of front lines. The Russians intended to build a garrison town in Kars after it was taken over from the Ottomans. ¹⁶ In addition the redoubts that were constructed by the Ottomans in Kars were upgraded after the Russians took control in the region. ¹⁷ The Russian minister of war, Pyotr Vannovsky, went to Kars in 1887 to inspect the constructions. He was accompanied by high-ranking military officers such as the general commander of Kars Province, Lt. Petro Tomic; the commander of the Caucasian Army, Gen. Vitaly Trotsky; the commander of the Defense Army of Tbilisi and Caucasian regiment of military engineers, Gen. Adolf Wilhelmovich von Schack and the commander of the Regiments of the Caucasian Fortresses, Gen. Edward Zezeman. ¹⁸

For the Russian General Staff, fortifying the Çakmak hills was a matter of the utmost importance. According to a letter sent from the Ottoman Consulate in Kars to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "the fortification of the Çakmak hills was inspected by a committee from the

Russian General Staff, additional redoubts were constructed between Muhlis, Pasa, and Tahmas, and Russians initiated the construction of new military barracks in the region." ¹⁹ To ensure the effective communication of the regiments in different redoubts, a regional telecommunications network was established. In addition an armory was built in Kars as a headquarters for supervising the execution of the duties in different redoubts.

During the inspection of the military settlements in Caucasia, the Russian minister of war, General Vannovsky, checked the redoubts in Karadag and Karabatlak, the front lines in the Çakmak hills,²⁰ and the newly built military hospital. He later went to Sarıkamış to inspect the military positioning of the regiments that were assigned to defend Soğanlı then proceeded to Kars and Baku after the military investigations.²¹

General Vannovsky's visit to the region with the high-ranking military officers was met with suspicion by the Ottoman government. Subsequently the Ministry of Foreign Affairs requested a report from the Ottoman Consulate in Petersburg regarding the developments in the Caucasus.²² In response the Ottoman government was told that the Russian minister of war's trip to Kars was part of the inspection of the Russian military in the region.²³

Further inspection was also carried out in Kars and Yerevan by the Russian viceroy of the Caucasus, Gen. Sergei Sheremetyev, especially in the stations of Sarıkamış and Kağızman.²⁴ The main reason for the intensification of the Russian inspections in the region was that Caucasia was regarded as the main site of the military conflict. The Russian commanders' purpose was to acquaint themselves with the geography of the region as well as the quality and quantity of the military units there.

RUSSIAN MILITARY UNITS IN CAUCASIA

An accurate assessment of the Russian military presence in the Caucasus requires analyzing the ratio of the Caucasian army in the overall Russian army.

The Russian army was mainly divided in two: regular and irregular troops. The expeditionary First Line Forces constituted the essence of the regular troops of the army. These forces also included infantry, cavalry, artillery units, and fortification squads. In addition a reserve army and a squad solely responsible for munitions were also part of the regular army.²⁵

The Caucasian Infantries constituted the entire infantry in the regular

army, formed by nine army corps, which consisted of three infantry divisions. One division was composed of 110 infantry units, including two Caucasian Grenadier regiments. The cavalry had one army corps which consisted of twelve regiments and three divisions; one cavalry division that consisted of twenty-eight regiments and seven household troops; an army corps composed of four dragoon regiments and four regiments of lancer cavalry units; eight regiments of armored cavalries; four regiments of reserved forces; and twenty-six regiments of the Caucasian Brigade. Overall, the Russian army had eighty-six regiments of cavalry units within the seventeen divisions.²⁶

The ratio of the Caucasian army to the whole Russian army can be illustrated as follows: 115 infantry battalions out of 702; 210 cavalry battalions out of 1,130; 30 artillery regiments out of 212; 164,000 soldiers out of 1,025,000, and 244 cannons out of 1,668.²⁷ The figures show that the Russians utilized a larger proportion of their army in the Caucasus, which shows the military importance of the region to them. The protection of the borders was also critical for the Russians. For this reason various units of the Russian army, the border guards, and the Kars police force were stationed in the province of Kars. In the 1880s the military units in Kars were specified as follows: four infantry regiments (151st Pyatigorsk [Beştau], 154th Derbent, 155th Kuba, 156th Elisabethpol [Elizavetopol/Ganja]), two cavalry regiments of Kuban Kazak forces (1st cavalry regiments and Terek Kazak regiments, 1st Mountain Mozdok cavalry regiments), and various artillery units.²⁸

According to the report by the Ottoman consul of Kars sent on July 4, 1882, Russia sought to settle the Don and Kuban Kazakhs in the villages around the border. Based on this plan, the new Kazakh settlers would be mobilized for a possible war and would ensure the security of the region in case war erupted. Russia also sent a certain number of military units to Iğdır because of its proximity to the border.²⁹

Table 22.1 outlines the Russian Army's presence in the Caucasus.

Thus the regular forces constituted the core of the Russian army in the Caucasus. Irregular militia forces were sought to be mobilized as a complementary force in the region. With this goal in mind the Russian minister of war gave orders to have a census of retired army officers and to recruit the eligible ones. Some army officers were also sent from Petersburg to form a regiment in the Caucasus. The Armenians of Tbilisi had also appealed to the government to serve in the Irregular Russian armies. The Armenians' willingness to join the Russian armies gradually intensified, especially by 1914.

Table 22.1. Russian Army's Presence in the Caucasus

Squadron	Brigade	REGIMENT	BATTALION
	Caucasian Army I	. Northern Caucasian Army Co	orps
Infantry Troops -			
19th Squadron Stavropol	_	_	_
20th Squadron Viladikavkaz	1st Brigade of Viladikavkaz	77th Regiment of Viladikavkaz	_
		78th Regiment of Nevinnomyssk	_
	2nd Brigade of Grozny	79th Regiment of Grozny	_
		80th Regiment of Khasev–Urte Terek	_
21st Squadron Petrovak	1st Brigade of Temir Khan Schoura	81st Regiment of Temir Khan Schoura	_
		82nd Regiment of Çerkez–Urte	_
	2nd Brigade of Kousary	83rd Regiment of Dagestan	_
		84th Regiment of Kousary	_
_	_	_	3rd Labinsk Plastron
_	_	_	4th Maikop Plastron
_	_	_	5th Maikop Plastron
_	_	_	6th Ekatarinador Plastron
Cavalry Troops -			
Kazak Tbilisi Cavalry Squadron	1st Brigade of Piatigorsk	43rd Regiment of Çerkez–Kolotzy	_
		44th Regiment of Piatigorsk	_
	2nd Brigade of Viladikavkaz	45th Regiment of Viladikavka	z—
		Regiment of Crimean Kuban Kazaks	_
Artillery Troops			
	20th Artillery Brigade of Viladikavkaz	_	_

Table 22.1. (cont'd.) Russian Army's Presence in the Caucasus

Squadron	Brigade	REGIMENT	BATTALION
_	21st Artillery Brigade of Temir-Khan	_	_
_	1st Cannons of Artillery with Cavalries	Terek–Mikhailovskii	_
_	2nd Cannons of Artillery with Cavalries	Terek-Mozdok	_
Military Enginee	ring Troops ——		
_	_	_	2nd Caucasian Sappers
_	_	_	1st Caucasian Military Engineer- ing
Reserve Troops			
_	Brigade of Reserve Kazak Infantries	_	_
_	Brigade of Reserve Kuban Kazak Artilleries	_	_
_	_	Reserve Kuban Kazak Cavalry Regiments	_

	Caucasian Army II. Trans-Caucasian Army Corps		
Infantry Troops			
Squadron	Brigade	Regiment	Battalion
Squadron of Tbilisi Kazak Grenadiers	1st Brigade of Manglis	13th Regiment of Manglis	_
		14th Regiment of Biey-Kloutsch	_
_	2nd Brigade of Tbilisi	15th Regiment Lagodekhi	_
		16th Regiment Tbilisi	_
38th Squadron of Kutaisi	1st Brigade of Kutaisi	149th Regiment of Kutaisi	_

Table 22.1. (cont'd.) Russian Army's Presence in the Caucasus

SOLIADRON	Brigade	REGIMENT	BATTALION
SQUADRON	DRIGADE		DALIALIUN
	2nd Brigade of Tbilisi	150th Regiment of Akhalzik 151st Regiment of Ardahan	_
		152nd Regiment of Tbilisi	_
39th Squadron of Alexandropol	1st Brigade of Alexandropol	153rd Regiment of Alexandropol	_
		154th Regiment of Kağızman	_
	2nd Brigade of Kars	155th Regiment of Kars	_
		156th Regiment of Sarıkamış	_
_	Tbilisi Caucasian Brigade of Marksmen	_	_
_	Telav Caucasian Brigade of Marksmen		
_	_	— 1st Tbilisi Pla (in Cossack infantry)	
_	_	— 2nd Khan- Plastun	
Cavalry Troops -			
1st Kazak 1st Brigade Tbilisi Squadron of Kars of Cavalries		Regiment of Karakort	_
		Regiment of Kars	_
	2nd Brigade of Viladikavkaz	Regiment of Kutaisi	_
		Regiment of Oltu	_
2nd Kazak Squadron of Cavalries	1st Brigade of Yerevan	Regiment of Kağızman —	
		Regiment of Yerevan	_
	2nd Brigade of Elisabethpol	Regiment of Yerevan Regiment of Labinsk	_ _

Table 22.1. (cont'd.) Russian Army's Presence in the Caucasus

Squadron	Brigade	REGIMENT	BATTALION
Artillery Troops			
_	Tbilisi Grenadier Artillery Brigade	_	_
_	38th Brigade of Artillery	_	_
_	39th Brigade of Artillery	_	_
_	2nd Kuban Kazak Artillery with Cavalries	_	_
_	5th Kuban Kazak Artillery with Cavalries	_	_
Reserve Troops -			
_	1st Reserve Infantry, Brigade of Kutaisi	_	_
_	2nd Tbilisi Brigade of Reserved Infantry	_	_
_	3rd Caucasian Reserved Brigade of Artillery	_	_
_	4th Caucasian Reserved Brigade of Artillery	_	_

	Infantry Battalions	Sotnia [100-man Kazak Squadron]	Artillery Troops
Northern Caucasian Army Corps	71	24	20
Trans-Caucasian Army Corps	66	48	22
Caucasian Army Overall	137	72	42

Source: Nalçacı, "Resûlzâde Hüseyin Hüsnü," 63–65.

RUSSIAN MILITARY MOBILITY IN THE CAUCASUS

The Russian Empire's expansion into Turkistan and its seizure of the Merv valley in 1884 triggered the possibility of a war erupting between Britain and Russia. The rivalry between these two major powers in central Asia mainly stemmed from Russia's pressure on Afghanistan, which was one of Britain's richest colonies. British concerns peaked after the sporadic transfer of Russian military units to the Afghan border. In the face of the Russian expansion in central Asia the British war plan involved British counterexpansion in the Caucasus by bombarding the coasts of Odessa and Caucasia and then landing troops. The Russians reinforced the shore batteries as a preemptive measure against the British expansion into the Caucasus. But the reluctance of major European powers to ally with Britain during its rivalry with the Russians deterred the British from further mobilizing their forces. Contemplating the heavy costs of a war with Britain, Russia also adopted a nonaggressive policy toward the British.

The prospect of a British-Ottoman alliance in the region as a result of the British-Russian rivalry triggered Russia's security concerns. ³⁶ So the Russians further reinforced naval and land forces to consolidate their defense structures in the region. The tighter security measures in the Caucasus included strengthening the Russian naval forces in the Black Sea. For this purpose the construction of battleships, initiated in 1882 on the orders of Alexander III, was completed in 1887. The battleships were given the names *Çeşme*, *Sinop*, and *Catherine II* to celebrate the Russian triumphs over the Ottomans. ³⁷ These ships, each weighing 10,000 tons, could travel at fourteen to fifteen nautical miles per hour and were designed to carry six twelve-inch guns. Russia also had in the Black Sea three 5,000-ton military transport ships, a 3,000-ton cruiser, six gunboats, and sixteen torpedo boats that traveled at fifteen to sixteen nautical miles per hour as well as many commercial ships that were used for military transportation in wartime. ³⁸

Caucasian security was very much dependent on the seizure of power in the Black Sea, so Russia sought to keep abreast of any developments around the Caucasian border of the Ottoman Empire. According to an agreement between the two countries, a foreign company would not be allowed to carry out the construction if the Ottoman Empire decided to build a railway on the coast of the Black Sea. It would be built by Russian companies.³⁹ In other words, the Russians got the concession to build

railways east of Ereğli, Ankara, Kayseri, Sivas, Harput, Diyarbakır, and Van. ⁴⁰ That was to serve as a bulwark against any development that would jeopardize Russian security.

The consolidation of the Russian naval forces in the Black Sea and the Russian seizure of control in the region altered the war plans against the Ottomans. According to a pamphlet that was circulated in military circles, the Russians were preparing to carry out a raid on the Ottomans by launching an assault on the Straits and stationing their troops along the shores. During the Turco-Italian War, these plans were again suggested by Alexander Izvolsky, the Russian ambassador to Paris, yet none were ever implemented. During the Turco-Italian War, these plans were again suggested by Alexander Izvolsky, the Russian ambassador to Paris, yet none were ever implemented.

In the face of the strong Russian naval presence in the Black Sea, the Ottoman navy was losing ground in the region. Sultan Abdülhamid II had demobilized the anchored naval forces around the Straits in case of an attempted military coup. Despite the recent purchases of battleships from Italy, France, and Germany, twenty-four battleships out of a total of fifty-two were not navigable. As these figures on the Russian and Ottoman naval forces indicate, the Ottomans were regarded as militarily inferior to the Russians.

The Russians also invested heavily in the land forces in the Caucasus. Especially after the rise of the rivalry with the British, the commanders in Batumi were ordered to expand the fortification of the military bases in 1885. The mobility of the Russian armies in the region was considerable, such as the transfer of the infantries to Batumi; construction of the railway to the redoubts there; construction of docks on its shores; and improvements in the redoubts of Garadok, Çoruh, and Sarısu.⁴⁴

According to a letter sent from the Ottoman Consulate in Tbilisi to the Ottoman Consulate in Petersburg, the Russians deployed a high number of artillery pieces and munitions to the Ottoman-Russian border, especially to Kars. The same letter noted that some cavalry regiments were transferred to the region of Ardahan and Alexandropol. In addition one cannon was moved to Karakilise; a military road was constructed in Ardahan; a military barracks was built in Ahilkelek; and two hundred horses were bought to ease the transfer of the munitions. In report sent from the Ottoman Consulate in Kars to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs reflected similarly upon the Russian military mobility in the region. The infantry regiment called Dernisky Polk would be transferred to Sarıkamış and a military barracks would be constructed for it.

The regiment that was intended to be sent to Sarıkamış from Kağızman was later found insufficient and was reinforced with an additional

regiment from Alexandropol.⁴⁷ The military barracks for that regiment was intended to be built in Northern Sarıkamış, a town with a concentrated Circassian population. After further investigation, however, the Russian government decided to change the construction time and the site due to the harsh climatic conditions in the region. In the following year two military barracks were built in a more appropriate site. During the construction, three artillery cannons were sent to the region. The first was sent from Ahilkelek, the second from Tbilisi to Sarıkamış, and the third from Tbilisi to Kağızman. Each cannon fortification had six guns (seyyare topu).⁴⁸

As a result of these transfers, which took place during the harshest winter conditions, the four Russian cannons were stationed on the borders: one in Yerevan, one in Kağızman, and two in Sarıkamış. No cannons had been stationed in Sarıkamış before, so this development raised concerns in the Ottoman Consulate in Kars, which promptly reported to the Ottoman government. In addition Russia sent two infantry troops, two cannons, and some Kazak soldiers to the region. The Russians then decided to implement the military drills in the towns of Hamamlı and Alisofu, located in the region of Sarıkamış. The Circassians and Greeks who inhabited the area were deported to the region of Micingerd.⁴⁹

Russia also modified its methods of securing the Ottoman border. It began to place Kazak cavalry at the first border line. The second line of defense was secured by infantries.⁵⁰ Sarıkamış accordingly became the hub of military settlements in late 1913.

The mobility of the Russian military in the major centers of the Caucasus was under the close scrutiny of the Ottoman envoys. Based on a report regarding the Russian military settlements sent from the Ottoman Consulate in Tbilisi to the Ottoman government, the Russian Caucasian Army mobilized, especially in Tbilisi, as a deterrent to any Ottoman attacks. The report also noted that the Russians spent 600,000 rubles for feasibility studies and implementation of the preliminary works of the new military settlement plan. According to Ottoman opinion, the plan was meant to aid Russia in heavily fortifying Tbilisi. 51

In 1898, as part of a buildup of food supplies, a large amount of rusk was shipped to Batumi and other border towns such as Kars and Oltu.⁵² The Ottoman government requested a detailed report from the Ottoman Consulate in Batumi regarding the breakdown of the Russian shipments.⁵³ The consulate's response claimed that the military shipments were trivial, mostly replacing the exhausted supplies after the military maneuvers last fall, but also noted that the Russians sent large cannons

and six hundred chests of bullets, which were later sent to Akstafa, at the end point of the military rail line. The consulate viewed such shipments of additional equipment with suspicion. The Russians generally supplied rusks to the soldiers in time of war and military maneuvers. Therefore this movement suggested that the Russians sought to prepare the region for the possible eruption of war. The report of the consulate also noted that Kars was regarded as a critical location for Russian strategic interests, stocked with a constant supply of food that could last for three years. Hence the Russian government aimed to send all necessary equipment to the region.⁵⁴

The Russian military drill in Batumi was addressed in another report of the Ottoman Batumi consul, prepared on May 15, 1899. The drill took place along the shores of Batumi on May 7, from seven to eleven at night. Consul Sedat Bey's words conveyed the extent of the drill: "I witnessed the military drill through a pair of binoculars. First it started offshore with the cruising of sailing boats into the darkness. To arrange the accurate navigation of the sailing boats, they utilized the rifle shots from a certain location on the shore. Then I witnessed an ostentatious lighthouse whose light was projected onto the whole sea and Batumi." 55

In the same year the Russian Caucasian Army was preparing to conduct a military drill with the two army corps, consisting of 70,000 infantry, cavalry, and artillery soldiers. According to the Ottoman Consulate in Tbilisi, the practices were to be held in Alexandropol, Kars, Ardahan, and Sarıkamış until the end of August, including two thousand horses and two hundred artillery pieces. 56 To implement the drill marksman squads were sent to the region on an expedition from Alexandropol and Yerevan.⁵⁷ This followed a report that another rifle squad was transferred to the Ottoman border.⁵⁸ The Russian deployment of military equipment to the region was unfaltering. According to an Ottoman investigation on the Russian transfer of the equipment, 370 chests of gunpowder and 800 chests of cannonballs were sent to Batumi and then transferred to Kars in August 1900.⁵⁹ Furthermore, 1,100 chests of additional gunpowder and 500 artillery shells were shipped to Batumi before being redirected by train to Tbilisi as a final destination. 60 Finally, an immense amount of rusk was distributed among the Russian soldiers. ⁶¹ An additional 3,000 infantry soldiers were transferred to Batumi, including their munitions, via the road of Viladikavkaz. Another battalion from Sohum arrived at Gori, next to Tbilisi. The Ottoman consul of Tbilisi informed the government that the 3,000 infantry soldiers would be sent to Manchuria against Japan, 62 yet the troops were sent to Kars. 63

It bears mentioning that Russia organized military drills in autumn of every year. The scale of the drills was dependent on the political conditions at the time. For instance, one of the largest military drills took place for one month in Tbilisi with the participation of two army corps in 1901: a commemorative drill for the centennial of the annexation of Georgia. The Russian government claimed that the large scale of the military drills mainly stemmed from the participation of Tsar Nicholas II in the ceremonies. Yet the long duration of the drills raised concern in Ottoman circles, according to the reports of the Ottoman consulates. For example, a report sent from the Ottoman Consulate in Batumi stated that the inhabitants of the region grew anxious in the midst of the Russian military drills. Yet Russia continued to implement drills in Alexandropol and in the port of Batumi.

Russian Mauser rifles constituted the core of the military equipment that arrived in Caucasia, along with hundreds of chests of cartridges sent to Tbilisi from Batumi.⁶⁷ Yet the weapons trade in Caucasia sometimes was not restricted to Russian imports. For instance, according to a report sent by the Ottoman Consulate in Tbilisi on June 15, 1895, Armenians of Etchmiadzin collected 500,000 rubles to purchase weapons from the British to meet Armenian needs. These weapons were intended to be sent to Anatolia, yet the Russian government sent orders to confiscate the weapons once they became aware of the smuggling.⁶⁸ Russian forces then captured some thirty thousand firecrackers and four Mauser rifles, thanks to intelligence regarding the existence of a supply of ammunition in Armenian towns.⁶⁹

The outcome of the Russo-Japanese War and the revolution of 1905 led to pessimism within government circles in Russia. After the prevalence of the revolution initiated by the oil workers of Baku, the prime minister, Pyotr Stolypin, ordered the viceroy of the Caucasus, Illarion Vorontsov-Dashkov, to transfer some troops to the region. After the peace treaty was signed between Russia and Japan, the tsar sought to reinforce his status in the hinterlands of the empire. But this was met with suspicion among the higher ranks of the land and naval forces. Vorontsov-Dashkov, in the aftermath of the revolution, anticipated that the Ottomans and Persians might pose some military threat to the Russians. For that reason, and to avoid any foreign presence in Russia, he made the case for an increased Russian military presence in the Caucasus. He also proposed a rapprochement with Austria-Hungry, whose assistance to the Ottomans had already proven to be weighty. Vorontsov-Dashkov submitted a report to the tsar in July 1906, stating that it was impossible to

separate the army and politics. Stolypin then asked Vorontsov-Dashkov to send military troops to Baku because of the unrest among the oil workers.⁷²

The Russian minister of foreign affairs, Sergei Sazonov, asked Vorontsov-Dashkov to select reliable soldiers to form a legion of Armenians, Kurds, and Assyrians. For this purpose Vorontsov-Dashkov met with the mayor of Tbilisi, Alexander Hatisov, and the Armenian bishop Mesrop Movsisyan, to seek help in forming the Armenian legions to fight against the Ottomans. The establishment of the Armenian legion was decided upon in a subsequent meeting that featured the high-ranking members of the Armenian community: the vice governor-general of Caucasia, Nikolai Peterson; the Russian Caucasian Army commander, Gen. Nikolai Yudenich; the leader of the Armenian community in Tbilisi, Bishop Mesrop; mayor Hatisov; the chief of the Armenian Committee of Tbilisi, Samson Arutünov, and a certain Dr. Hagop Zavriev.⁷³

By 1910 the Russian Caucasian Army was significantly transformed. The Russian government summoned the commanders and officers living in Tbilisi to join their original battalions on the border.⁷⁴ Additional Russian soldiers from various towns of Caucasia also arrived at Tbilisi in June 1910.⁷⁵ According to a telegram sent from the Ottoman province of Erzurum, Russians also gathered troops of Kars and Tbilisi.⁷⁶

The Ottoman Empire assigned its consul in Petersburg to analyze why the Russians were intensifying their military mobility in the region. The Ottoman consul in Petersburg had certain insights into Russian military policies: "The Russian Foreign Minister, Sergei Sazonov, claims that he was in absolute coordination with the Minister of War and fully rejects the mobilization of the military units around Kars. Sazonov asserts that transportation of grain and any kind of crops does not necessarily mean mobilization of the combat units."⁷⁷ Despite Sazonov's attempt to deflect Ottoman concerns over the developments in the Caucasus, other reports showed that Russia was secretly implementing military policies that it considered to be of high importance. Although the Russians claimed that military mobility in the Caucasus mainly took place along the Persian border, the investigations in late 1912 around Kars and Sarıkamış showed that Russian military troops had actually been transferred to the Ottoman border.⁷⁸ Thus the claims of military deployment along the Persian border were mere attempts to divert attention.

The Russian government temporarily prohibited the transportation of commercial commodities in trains on the Caucasus route, designating them solely to dispatch military units and equipment. The trains were also used to transfer the 3rd Army Corps along with the military equipment to Persia. Moreover, around 150 officers arrived in Sarıkamış via the Tbilisi train. The dispatch of military units was carried out continuously and increasingly. In other words, the army was put on full alert for any kind of military campaigns.⁷⁹

The Russian military postings in the Caucasus, especially after 1910, were met with deep suspicion by the Ottoman leadership. Yet the Ottomans did not take any measures toward a military confrontation with the Russians. They merely accumulated intelligence regarding these developments. It is likely that the ongoing wars in the Balkans and Tripolitania at that point overshadowed the threat in the Caucasus. This incapacity to address the urgent situation in the Caucasus led to one of the most unfortunate events in Ottoman history: the Sarikamiş Operation of 1914–15, during which tens of thousands of Ottoman soldiers perished.

CONCLUSION

This study deals with the Russian military presence in the Caucasus, from the Treaty of Berlin to the outbreak of World War I, derived mainly from the Ottoman Archives and the reports of the Ottoman consulates.

Ottoman-Russian relations were primarily determined by their mutual aggression toward one another. The historical documents reflect the history of the military conflicts between the two states. The intelligence reports sent from the Ottoman consuls to the government officials indicate that Russian military mobility in the Caucasus was met with deep suspicion and was considered a direct threat to Ottoman territorial integrity.

Throughout the nineteenth century the Caucasus became a contested zone of the rivalry involving Russia, the Ottoman Empire, and the Qajar Dynasty. As realpolitik dictates, seizure of power in the Caucasus required the Russians to have a strong military presence in the region. Due to the Ottoman-Russian rivalry of the nineteenth century, Caucasia became the major front line, along with the western front. Though Russia could not achieve any tangible military success in the Caucasus until the Treaty of Berlin, its military power provided leverage regarding the political agenda of the region.

The Russian annexation of Kars, Ardahan, and Batumi as a result of the Treaty of Berlin caused a shift in Russia's security policy toward the Caucasus. The port of Batumi became the headquarters of the military movements, while the whole city of Kars turned into a major Russian military base. In the face of the eruption of a world war, Russia organized numerous military drills to prepare its Caucasian army in locations where a possible military confrontation with the Ottomans might break out. Even though the Ottoman government was aware of the Russian military mobilization in the region via the reports of the Ottoman consuls, however, it failed to take military measures to confront the Russian aggression. In this sense the Ottoman-Greek War of 1897, the Tripolitania War of 1911, and the Balkan Wars of 1912–13 handicapped the Ottoman Empire, rendering it incapable of engaging the Russian deployments in the Caucasus.

NOTES

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Reclaiming the Homeland

The Caucasus-Oriented Activities of Ottoman Circassians during and after World War I

Georgy Chochiev

In the scholarly literature relating to Ottoman/Turkish Caucasian policy during and after World War I the focus until recently has been traditionally and quite justifiably placed on the South Caucasus or Transcaucasia (the territory of the future Soviet republics of Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia). In contrast, the areas to the north of the Greater Caucasus Range, by virtue of their remoteness from the zones of hostilities on the Ottoman-Russian front and subsequent territorial and diplomatic disputes, occupied the periphery of the researchers' interest. Meanwhile, it was the North Caucasus that until the mid-nineteenth century had a virtually conflict-free experience of relationships with the Ottoman state, regarded as a spiritual metropolis and to some extent a nominal suzerain by the Circassians. This centuries-long connection of the North Caucasian (especially northwestern Caucasian) mountaineers with the Ottoman cultural, religious, and political world and the coercive nature of their descent from the Porte-guided path of evolution due to the Russian conquest, naturally, could well have laid some base for the reanimation of pro-Istanbul sentiment in the region. Moreover, a highly sensitive human thread also connected North Caucasian peoples with the Ottoman Empire: the existence within its borders of numerous members of the Circassian diaspora created by the mass expulsion of Caucasian mountaineers to the sultan's domains by Russia (Russian mukhadzhirstvo, Turkish muhaceret, hicret).2 This diaspora was shaped mainly during the 1850s to 1870s, though the migration was ongoing in small batches until the very eve of World War I.3 In view of these factors the North Caucasus, for all

its peripheral position, could hardly have been entirely excluded from the general eastern strategies of Istanbul and later Ankara leaders. Similarly, the muhacirs and their descendants residing in the country could scarcely evade getting involved in one way or another in the development and implementation of Ottoman Caucasian policies. The social and ideological profile of the empire's Circassian population and its elites predisposed them to participate in military and political projects crucial for the fate of their historic homeland (as shown below).

This chapter does not aim to investigate the peripeties of the Caucasian events between 1914 and the early 1920s in the discourse of historic Ottoman-Russian rivalry or the geopolitical contest between the two military alliances for domination in the region. Rather it attempts to examine the experience (and drama) of one of the minor and not always conspicuous participants of this game: Circassian diasporic nationalism and its formal institutions. In other words, this study traces a background subject (still of some importance in explaining the motives and moves of Turks and their allies): the activities of Ottoman Circassian elites seeking to facilitate solution of the "Caucasus problem" (including its North Caucasian component) in a certain way that looked most favorable to them. Also, this chapter determines the correlation of this activity with the Ottoman state's Caucasian policy.

Among nationalist ideologies and movements that have arisen in the Ottoman Empire in the last two centuries of its existence, Circassian ethno-nationalism is one of the latest and at the same time most specific phenomena. Being a typical diaspora people, Circassians, unlike the empire's indigenous populations, could not have any meaningful territorialpolitical aspirations or formulate independent nationhood projects on Ottoman soil. Due to the extremely painful reflection of the events in the final phase of the Russo-Caucasian War in their collective memory, the mind-set of a significant part of the Circassian community from the outset was characterized by pronounced revanchist striving. This showed itself in the pursuit of forcible liberation of the Caucasus with the help of more potent third powers and subsequent hypothetical return of the exiles. In the early years of immigration these feelings were fostered by the muhacirs' expectations of a near victory of the Ottomans and their European allies in another war with Russia and thus reversion of the political status of the Caucasus.⁵ These attitudes largely account for the active participation of Circassians—generally on the initiative and under the direction of traditional feudal nobility and with the explicit encouragement of Ottoman authorities—in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78

on the Anatolian and Balkan fronts and immediately on the Caucasus Black Sea coast in regular and irregular troops.⁶

The Ottoman defeat in the war dealt a severe blow to the hopes of Circassians to recover their Caucasian homeland and for a long time forced their orientation toward complete social and civil integration and assimilation into Ottoman society. This tendency was further strengthened by the tsarist administration's tough policy of suppressing all significant contacts between the diasporic and "parental" sections of North Caucasian peoples, especially attempts at repatriation. The following three and a half decades were characterized on the whole by smooth relations between Istanbul and St. Petersburg, so there were no objective prerequisites for reactualization of the Caucasus-oriented revanchism among Ottoman Circassians. Yet strong evidence indicated some kind of spontaneous ethno-revenge: voluntary or government-inspired participation of North Caucasians in repression of the Russian-backed (or so perceived) actions of Christian subjects, primarily Anatolian Armenians.⁷

CIRCASSIAN ETHNO-NATIONALISM IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE DURING THE PREWAR YEARS

Immediately after the Young Turk Revolution of 1908, in the atmosphere of constitutionally authorized ethno-cultural pluralism, a group of North Caucasian high-ranking military leaders, bureaucrats, and intellectuals, raised in the diaspora, established the Circassian Society of Unity and Mutual Assistance (CSUMA) in Istanbul. The CSUMA was engaged principally in cultural, enlightening, and social activities (development of alphabets, "national" educational and historiographical projects, eradication of patriarchal domestic slavery, and so forth) and occasionally positioned itself as a semiofficial representative of the Circassian population of the empire. At the same time, the high standing (at least three marshals and several dozen military and civilian paşas as well as others) of its founders and members bound it to the top circles of the Ottoman state establishment.8 The ethno-reformist doctrine of Circassianism (Çerkesçilik) articulated by the society contemplated constructing a modern diasporic ethnic nation on the basis of North Caucasian communities scattered across the country as an integral part of the multicultural Ottoman world.9 In the prewar years, however, the society paid increasing attention to assessment of the prospective development of the situation in the North Caucasus and Russia in general, clearly marking its concern with reintegration of members of the Circassian diaspora with their native land. According to some accounts, at this stage some CSUMA activists had already planned to pique the Porte's interest in the creation of the "independent Caucasus," conceived as a center of gravity for the diaspora and a potentially reliable barrier protecting Ottoman possessions against the "threat from the north." During the relatively calm Ottoman-Russian relations of the prewar period, however, the authorities had little reason to demand such projects. ¹¹

Simultaneously, the CSUMA deliberately cultivated an attitude toward the Caucasus as a "genuine" and "primary" home through its publications circulated among compatriots in the Ottoman Empire, stimulating interest in current developments and processes there. Moreover, after about 1911, in line with an increase of autocratic and Turkist patterns in the CUP's domestic policy, the society began to advance an idea of the impossibility of the cultural survival of Circassians outside the Caucasus in the long term in its writings. This testifies to a certain disappointment among the Circassian intellectuals in regard to the feasibility of the doctrine of Circassianism. Between 1910 and 1913 the CSUMA sent a number of its specially trained young members to the North Caucasus through legal channels. These members got engaged in teaching in local primary schools according to curricula prepared by the society, disseminating its views on "national" issues, and accumulating information on the area. The second of the course of the area.

Although the CSUMA had to abridge its activities to a large extent in 1912 to 1914, the political nucleus of the organization in the summer of 1914 was quite clearly expressing its keenness to cooperate with the CUP leadership in shaping and realizing the Ottoman Caucasian strategy. One of the CSUMA's notable figures, the governor of the Beirut province, Bekir Sami Bey (Kunduk), as early as July 30, 1914, addressed a letter to Enver Paşa proposing to arrange antitsarist insurrections of the local people in the Caucasus in the event of war.¹⁴ He also recommended that Enver involve generals Muhammed Kamil Paşa and Muhammed Fazıl Paşa in this task.¹⁵ They were relatives of famous nineteenth-century mountaineer resistance leader Imam Shamil. 16 From that time Bekir Sami regularly consulted interested state bodies and services (just as other eminent Circassians might have), including the Special Organization, on matters of operational planning in the Caucasus.¹⁷ Yet the special autumn 1914 issue of the CSUMA's periodical Guaze, renamed Kafkas for this occasion, expressly stated that the true reason for the creation of the

society had always been the emancipation and revival of the Caucasus. It also emphatically urged the Ottoman Circassians to be prepared "to sacrifice their lives and property" for the sake of salvation of "ancestral graves." ¹⁸

MOBILIZATION AND THE CIRCASSIANS

As far back as the days of their clandestine activities, the Young Turks on repeated occasions had declared their commitment to act as protectors and political mentors of the Caucasian Muslims. ¹⁹ But the CUP leaders' substantive interest in finding practical ways to influence the situation in the Caucasus appears to have awakened only shortly before or even after they had finalized their alliance with the Central Powers early in August 1914. Due to its location the Caucasus was of critical importance as a linchpin within Istanbul's basic geostrategic task in the upcoming war: containment of the Russian threat to Anatolia and the Straits. Therefore the region soon became one of the priority targets for the Ottoman General Staff as well as the German military leaders who supervised it.

The CUP leaders' extreme interest in accomplishing a rapid breakthrough in the Caucasus, encouraged by the German command, necessitated that they take advantage of the North Caucasian diaspora factor. In many places with dense North Caucasian populations high numbers of volunteers enrolled in the military under the guidance of traditional leaders or Circassian professional military men. For example, in the second half of August the inhabitants of the Circassian settlements of Quneitra, Balqa, and other districts of Syria began to arrive in the vilayet's capital city requesting admission to the army, even though most of them were still exempted from conscription. Soon they were united into the Circassian Cavalry Regiments, headed by the commander of the local gendarmerie, Vasfi Mirza Paşa. They took an active part in the Ottoman attacks on the Suez Canal in 1914-15, the protection of the Hijaz Railway, and the prevention of a British attempt to seize Amman in March 1918, along with other major offensive and defensive actions of the Ottomans in the region.²⁰ Volunteer mounted detachments formed by the Circassians of Uzunyayla in central Anatolia in the winter of 1914–15 participated in battles in the Kars area, suffering heavy losses.²¹ Of course, the mass zeal for enlistment could not be attributed only to a surge of the Caucasus-oriented ethno-revanchist feeling among Circassians under the influence of the CSUMA's agitation. Probably much more important was the urge to perform the duty of allegiance to the state that had been

their home for a long time and earn the traditional prestige of military service, which was valued highly in the Circassian culture.²²

Some facts indicate the existence of deliberate guidelines in the Ottoman headquarters at the very beginning of the war to send or attract Circassians to the Caucasian front, undoubtedly on the basis of their nationalist fervor and presumable knowledge of the local languages, cultural and geographic realities, and so forth. It is difficult to avoid noticing that two of the three corps constituting the 3rd "Caucasian" army in the initial period of the war were commanded by Circassians with a rather marked nationalist background: Yusuf İzzet Paşa and Abdülkerim Paşa. ²³ Many of the division commanders and staff officers in those corps also were Circassians. ²⁴

Circassians and members of other Caucasian groups definitely were also encouraged to join the Special Organization's irregular units intended for action in the Caucasus. The initiative in putting forward such projects may well have come from the German military analysts. Immediately after the outbreak of the war the chief of the German Intelligence Bureau for the East, Max von Oppenheim, proposed to create a military force of 20,000 to 30,000 soldiers who were descended from Circassian and Georgian refugees residing in the Ottoman Empire. This force would be used in the Russian Caucasus as part of a larger plan to destabilize the Entente countries' Muslim regions. At the same time, German agents got into contact with the North Caucasians settled in Anatolia to ascertain their ability to provoke revolts in their homeland.²⁵ At the end of November 1914 the Ottoman Interior Ministry forwarded a secret circular to the heads of several western and central Anatolian provinces, instructing them to assemble and prepare to be dispatched within a week to the Caucasus "the largest possible number of Lazes and Circassians capable of conducting guerrilla warfare, including prisoners and persons familiar with robberies." ²⁶ Similar orders were also sent out by the CUP Central Committee. A response letter of the mutasarrif of the Balıkesir District, dated December 3, 1914, provides an idea of the standards demanded for the prospective recruits as well as the difficulties accompanying their selection. Expressing his readiness immediately to send 300-400 men suitable for reconnaissance and sabotage operations on the front line and behind it, the official noted that almost none of the Circassians living in the area knew Russian or were directly acquainted with the Caucasian terrain. The report also referred to the possibility of finding five to ten people who would be able to spread propaganda among Caucasian villagers despite having only a primary school education, with the purpose of inciting them against the Russian administration.²⁷ At the same time, in accordance with the cabinet's decision, prosecutions of some cases were terminated or deferred when criminals gave their consent to join those detachments.²⁸

This recruiting work seems to have attracted some high-rank officers of North Caucasian origin. For example, the notorious leader of prosultanic rebellions of the Independence War period in Marmara region, Ahmed Anzavur, was employed in one of these units on the recommendation of Yusuf İzzet Paşa, with whom he was acquainted through the CSUMA network.²⁹ Likewise, on the request of the Special Organization, Muhammed Fazil Paşa sent "his most daring people" to Dagestan "to implement important things" as early as the end of August 1914.³⁰

During autumn and winter of 1914–15 Circassian units and parties of agitators were regularly sent to the South Caucasus and occasionally to the North Caucasus to conduct special operations and prepare revolts of the local people. Judging from the available reports, these groups appear to have been less numerous than similar Laz and Georgian forces. More importantly, their activities on the whole produced disappointingly little effect.³¹

FORMATION OF THE CONCERTED CAUCASIAN PLATFORM OF THE CIRCASSIAN NATIONALISTS AND THE CUP LEADERSHIP

The Ottoman leaders, along with making purely military preparations, pinned their hopes on the involvement of the Circassian elite in political and propaganda work. The purpose was to channel developments in the Caucasus in a direction expedient for Istanbul authorities and create an international background conducive to the achievement of their objectives in the region. Selected figures of the prewar Circassian movement played the role of the regime's partners in this planned "Caucasian game." The criteria for their selection seem to have been unquestioned loyalty to the state and adequate prestige in the North Caucasian milieu.

Direct contacts that started between the Ottoman administration and a narrow group of Circassian leaders in August 1914 resulted in an agreement to collaborate for the sake of the goals of the official Caucasian policy, which generally coincided with the diaspora's ethno-political aspirations. At this stage the parties in principle approved the model of a confederative state consisting of several autonomous national units as the political system of the Caucasus "after its liberation." The head of this

projected entity (or, alternatively, only of its North Caucasian constituent) was supposed to be chosen from among Ottoman princes.³² That certainly implied some degree of "vassalage" to the Ottomans. In their vision of the ultimate goal of their efforts Circassian activists from the start generally adhered to the more pro-Ottoman approach; meanwhile the parallel participant in the Caucasian consultations, the emigrant Committee for the Liberation of Georgia, was advocating (with German support) complete independence from Istanbul and formal neutrality of the future confederation.³³

The top officials of the state were directly involved in these negotiations: war minister Enver Paşa and interior minister Talat Paşa as well as the leading members of the Special Organization. On the North Caucasian side the central figure was the chair of the CSUMA foundation board, Marshal Fuad Paşa, who had wide connections in the highest political, diplomatic, and military circles of the empire. An important role in the shaping of the political strategies and tactics of Circassian elite was played by another ranking member of the CSUMA: Col. Hüseyin Tosun Bey. Shortly after the beginning of the war he was appointed director of the newly created Ottoman National Telegraph Agency and the head of the Africa and Tripolitania Department of the Special Organization. From that time the government probably started to finance the Caucasus-oriented activities of Circassians, mainly from the budgets of the War Ministry and Special Organization.

PROVOKING A CAUCASIAN UPRISING

In the initial period of the war the Ottomans planned on the incitement of a large-scale uprising in the Caucasus to support their expected offensive. The Turkish Medical Mission (TMM) was founded in August 1914 under the direct instruction of Enver Paşa. The TMM was in effect a Caucasian committee consisting of a number of well-known persons of Caucasian origin with Fuad Paşa at their head. Presumably this organization was to coordinate—under the guise of legal humanitarian and medical activities and at least until the official announcement of a state of war between the two countries—the work of Ottoman agents: gathering intelligence in the Caucasus, stimulating anti-Russian sentiment in the region, and supplying weapons to local rebels. These intentions were energetically encouraged by Germans, although their main partners in the Caucasian affairs were Georgian political activists. The German ambassador Hans von Wangenheim, on behalf of his

government, promised TMM members Fuad Paşa and Muhammed Fazıl Paşa to render the North Caucasians material aid, information, and other assistance in their anti-Russian striving. He also assured the Circassians that Berlin would recognize the independence of a Caucasian confederative state after the war, including its northern part inhabited by the mountain peoples. It seems, however, that Fuad Paşa and Muhammed Fazıl Paşa did not fully share the optimism of Ottoman and German officials about the possibility of success of such an enterprise. As a condition of their participation they demanded that the Germans include a clause in their future peace treaty with Russia guaranteeing that in the event of an adverse outcome of the Caucasian revolt all its participants would be admitted to Germany as political émigrés or at least be given amnesty by the Russian authorities. Wangenheim readily gave the necessary assurances.⁴⁰

The discussion so far has summarized our knowledge of the TMM and the patriotic endeavors of Circassian politicians during the second half of 1914 and beginning of 1915. But the efforts of the diaspora members to provoke instability in the North Caucasus (through the channels available to them), just like the steps of the Ottoman and German secret services pursuing the same object, had not yielded any tangible results. This convinced the circles in charge of this project of the exaggerated nature of their expectations. Moreover, with the failure of the winter 1914–15 Caucasian (Kars-Sarıkamış) campaign of the Ottoman army and its transition to the defensive in northeastern Anatolia, any further steps in that direction became altogether irrelevant for a while.

LOBBYING FOR CAUCASIAN INDEPENDENCE IN BERLIN AND VIENNA

After 1915 the Circassian leaders' hopes for changing political conditions in their homeland became less associated with the success of a tentative Ottoman advance and attendant actions to destabilize Russian government directly in the Caucasus. Instead their attempts were to a greater degree determined by the expectation of a general defeat and subsequent disintegration of the Russian Empire in the case of the German-Austrian alliance's victory in the war. Therefore the task of promotion of projects aimed at postwar creation of a Caucasian government independent from Russia at the international level—primarily in the Porte's senior partner countries within the bloc—became the primary activity of the politicized segment of the Circassian diaspora. The CUP administration, confident

that such an entity was destined to fill the role of Istanbul's satellite, fully supported the desire of Circassians to intensify their political propaganda abroad. The importance of such efforts had significantly increased because of a gradual cooling toward the idea of Caucasian independence on the part of German officials, who had become frustrated with the fruitlessness of anti-Russian subversive activity in the Caucasus during the first year of the war.⁴¹

The outcome of the endeavors to give an organized shape to the stated plans, authorized by the Porte and Special Organization, was the establishment of two new groups in September 1915: the Committee for the Independence of the Caucasus (CIC) and the Society of Unity of the Caucasus (SUC). Their primary goal was to foster the ideal of the "free and united Caucasus" by political and military means, which was to be practically embodied in the previously agreed-upon model of Caucasian confederation, usually viewed at this stage as a union of the North Caucasus, Georgia, and a federation of Azerbaijani and Armenian cantons. This extended solution to the Caucasus problem was convenient for both Ottoman and German authorities, who considered it essential for the establishment of their supremacy on a region-wide scale to assure the early leveling of antagonisms between the local peoples and reduction of their often divergent national aspirations to some common denominator. For their part the Circassian elite could not help but be interested in securing a potentially friendly ally in the South Caucasus. Moreover, a joint advocacy by all Caucasians of the claim for an independent "Greater Caucasus," rather than individual parts, had a better chance of gaining support in the West. For this reason the CIC and the SUC arose as pan-Caucasian organizations, formed by the North Caucasians and members of Georgian and Azerbaijani émigré groups who also expected help from Istanbul in realization of their political aspirations. But the decisive role in the establishment and operation of both associations, led by Fuad Paşa and stationed at the CSUMA's headquarters, was played by North Caucasians.42

In December 1915 the CIC sent a delegation to Germany and Austria-Hungary with the purpose of lobbying for Caucasian independence in the official and public circles of those countries. In addition to its head, Fuad Paşa, the delegation was composed of Aziz Bey (Meker), professor at the Halkalı Higher Agricultural School at Istanbul, and İsa Ruhi Paşa, the inspector of the War Ministry Medical Department, as the representatives of the North Caucasus; Giorgi Machabeli and Kamil Bey (Tavdgiridze) as the representatives of Georgia; and Selim Bey (Bebutov)

as the representative of Azerbaijan. Despite the semiofficial character of this mission, it was received at the foreign minister level in Vienna and Berlin through the mediation of the CUP leaders. These contacts were used by the delegates to convince their counterparts of the "unbearable situation of the Caucasian peoples" and their striving to "get rid of the yoke of Russia" as well as to establish a confederative state under the patronage of the Porte and its allies. In January 1916 the delegation handed memoranda to the German and Austro-Hungarian governments requesting that they provide the CIC, as a representative of the Caucasus's indigenous peoples and their political emigrations and diasporas, moral and material assistance in achieving the named goals. In response, however, both governments simply confirmed their sympathies for the Caucasians' aspirations in a general way.⁴³

As a result of these negotiations the CIC was allowed to carry out agitational and recruiting work among ethnic Caucasians in the camps for Russian prisoners of war in Germany and Austria-Hungary in order to prepare a "core staff" for the military, political, and other institutions of a future independent state. In December 1915–January 1916 Fuad Paşa had personally recruited a few thousand Caucasians and other Muslims for the Ottoman army. ⁴⁴ Fuad Paşa's delegation also established contact with ethnic Caucasians who were Russian subjects (students, businesspeople, and so forth) and had remained there after the outbreak of the war, forming several émigré groups. From now on they were to operate as representatives of the CIC and act as another channel for strengthening its ties with the Caucasus. ⁴⁵

After the return of the delegation to Istanbul, however, a serious conflict between the CIC's three national factions (North Caucasian, Georgian, and Azerbaijani) grew out of objective differences in their political platforms and chosen strategies. Quite soon after the establishment of the committee its Georgian members had begun to manifest their preference to distance themselves from the Porte by coming under direct German guidance. Most of the Azeris preferred to act within the Committee for Protection of the Rights of Turco-Tatar Muslim Peoples of Russia (created simultaneously with the CIC and SUC under the direction of the editor of the journal *Türk Yurdu*, Yusuf Akçura), thus coming out as supporters of the idea of Turkic, rather than Caucasian, unity. It appears that the Circassians were the most committed to organizational unity and to the principle of confederation as the ultimate objective of the Caucasian nations' struggle for independence, insisting on the need to combine the Ottoman and German vectors in their current activities.

After the Georgians and Azeris actually ceased to work as a part of the CIC, however, its Circassian core led by Fuad Paşa had no alternative but to continue to act in a narrower ethnic format. This change is reflected in the renaming of the organization as the Committee of North Caucasian Political Emigrés in Turkey (CNCPET) in April 1916. ⁴⁷ The CIC's parallel structure, the SUC, also turned into a purely North Caucasian group, though preserving its original name.

CIRCASSIANS AT THE CONGRESS OF OPPRESSED NATIONS

The CNCPET played a key role in the preparation of the most notable political and propagandist demarche of the Ottoman Circassians on the international stage: the participation of a delegation, speaking on behalf of North Caucasians, in the Third Conference of Nationalities, informally styled the Congress of Oppressed Nations. The conference was held on June 27-29, 1916, at Lausanne under the aegis of the so-called Union of Nationalities and with the offstage support of the German Foreign Ministry. 48 The representativeness of this forum, which brought together delegates of over twenty dependent and colonial nations of Europe, Asia, and Africa, and its site in neutral Switzerland ensured some degree of response in the public and political circles of various countries. The CNCPET group was sent to Lausanne with the Special Organization's funding and was included in the list of conference participants with the assistance of the German embassy in the Ottoman Empire. 49 The delegation consisted of professor Aziz Bey; Seyid Tahir Efendi, a theologian and popular preacher at Istanbul; and a certain İsmail Bey, apparently a Russian subject or a recent émigré from the Caucasus. İsmail Bey was probably added to the group to legitimize the delegates' attempt to express the interests not only of the diaspora but of the actual population of the North Caucasus (it is noteworthy that the other two members of the mission were also former Russian subjects). Two more North Caucasians attended the conference as observers: Mehmed Şamil Bey, a student at the Political Science School of the University of Geneva, and well-known Ottoman public figure Ahmed Saib Bey. 50 Like the delegates from other parts of the Russian Empire, Seyid Tahir Efendi and İsmail Bey (as representatives of Dagestan and Circassia, respectively) criticized the policies of the tsarist government in regard to the nationalities issue and demanded that their peoples be allowed to exercise their cultural, religious, economic, and political rights. They once again confirmed their commitment to full independence from Russia in the form of the Caucasian confederation (in contrast to some other delegations, who argued only for cultural autonomy).⁵¹

During their sojourn at Lausanne, Aziz Bey, the head of the North Caucasian delegation, and Yusuf Akçura, who represented Volga Tatars, established communication with the League of the Alien [Non-Russian] Peoples of Russia, created with tacit German support. This group aimed to attract the attention not only of the Central Powers but also of broader international circles to the condition of different nationalities under tsarist rule, including, for instance, U.S. president Woodrow Wilson.⁵² Aziz Bey and Yusuf Akçura met several times with the Bolshevik leader Vladimir Lenin, who was living in political exile in Switzerland and also maintained certain contacts with German agents.⁵³ This testified to the Circassian elite's desire to build relationships not only with the movements of other non-Russian peoples of the tsarist empire but also with the Russia-wide radical opposition groups.

After the conference at Lausanne, the CNCPET continued endeavors to form public opinion in a manner conducive to its political objectives in the West by publishing articles in periodicals as well as printing books and brochures on the problems of the North Caucasus and its diaspora in various languages.⁵⁴

ATTEMPTS TO CREATE THE "NATIONAL ARMY"

Despite the predominance of purely political endeavors in the CIC-SUC-CNCPET activities, their leaders in this period appear not to have given up hopes for the armed solution of the Caucasus problem or at least supporting their ambitions for statehood by successful and resounding moves in the military sphere. Thus it seemed to them particularly important to create national armed units to be used in the Caucasian front. These units were to produce not only military but also political and propagandistic effects. Moreover, such a concrete contribution to the cause of liberation of the Caucasus, according to some Circassian activists, ensured that North Caucasians would receive certain advantages in the future confederation. ⁵⁵

At a meeting of the SUC activists in October 1915 involving Fuad Paşa, Bekir Sami Bey, and Aziz Bey, an appeal was issued to the Porte requesting assistance in the construction of a "national army." Toward this end the officers and soldiers of North Caucasian descent were to be withdrawn from the regular army and formed into ethnic units. All con-

scripts among Ottoman Circassians and selected former Russian prisoners of war were then to be enrolled in these units. These troops, with up to 60,000 men and stationed in the Trabzon area, were supposedly going to be paid for with finances and allowances from the reserves of the War Ministry, while being formally placed in the charge of the SUC. By February 1916 this force should have been fully prepared to perform combat missions and to take an active part in the next Ottoman attack in the Caucasus, scheduled by Enver Paşa for 1916. The plan was supported by some of the Ottoman leaders, especially those related to the War Ministry and Special Organization, although not all influential Istanbul circles believed in its expediency. Discussions over this issue did not last long, as the renewed advance of the Russian troops into the east Anatolian interior in early 1916 deprived them of any practical meaning. 57

Some Circassian politicians, disenchanted with the insufficiency of the Porte's support, tried to resolve the problem of building a national army with the help of the Germans, bypassing Ottoman authorities. In the summer of 1916 Bekir Sami Bey passed a proposal to German officials in Istanbul that would place under German control several thousand ethnic North Caucasians (Ottoman subjects as well as prisoners of war and defectors) who were "dissatisfied with Turks" and therefore unwilling to serve in the Ottoman army. This unit, fully provided with arms and horses and named the "Circassian Legion," would be immediately dispatched against the Russians. The initiative was originally viewed with some interest in Berlin, but the Germans feared complications in their relations with the Ottomans and were aware of the recent unsuccessful experience of creating the "Georgian Legion." In the end they turned the proposal down. 60

POLITICAL ACTIVITIES OF THE CIRCASSIAN NATIONALISTS AFTER THE REVOLUTIONS IN RUSSIA

From the perspective of the elite of Circassian diaspora, the first three years of the war were a period of uncertain and not very fruitful waiting for favorable changes in the global and regional military-political situation. In fact all of the actions of the Caucasian committees noted above were preventive preparations for these long-expected shifts. The situation changed drastically after the February 1917 Revolution in Russia. The downfall of tsarism, the collapse of the Russian fronts, and the disintegration of the country strengthened the hopes of the Circassian organizations. Information about two congresses of the United Caucasian

Mountaineers Alliance (UCMA), held in May and September 1917 in the North Caucasus on the initiative of indigenous liberal-democratic intellectual groups, quickly reached Istanbul. The congresses had placed on the agenda the issue of self-determination of the North Caucasus, which seemed to confirm the correctness of the Circassian politicians' strategic calculations and could only evoke further enthusiasm among their followers in the diaspora. 61

The CUP leaders also were encouraged by the processes taking place within the former Russian Empire and renewed the idea of creating Porte-controlled states in the Turkic and Muslim areas of Russia. As in 1914 the central place in these plans was the Caucasus region. As early as February 1918, at the negotiations in Brest-Litovsk, the Ottoman delegation proposed the creation of a "buffer" state consisting of the Muslim-populated territories of the South and North Caucasus. This plan, however, was soundly rejected by both Soviet and German representatives. 62

The emerging situation prompted the CUP leaders more deeply to involve members of the diasporic elite in their Caucasus policies. Through Circassian activists the Ottomans established their monitoring of the young mountaineer movement. In late 1917 and early 1918 the SUC, working in close contact with the Special Organization, launched a number of appeals to the peoples of the Caucasus with a call to step up their struggle for independence. It also demanded that various European states and organizations support these efforts. On November 20, 1917, the SUC forwarded a statement to the Ottoman, German, Austro-Hungarian, Polish, Bulgarian, and "central Russian" governments as well as the Ukrainian Committee and the Stockholm and Berne Peace Conferences. This statement reminded them of the "recognition by the recent Russian revolution of the right of all peoples and nationalities of Russia to independence." Based on this, it expressed confidence in "the urgent need for confirmation...on the part of the indigenous peoples of the Caucasus before all governments and civilized public opinion of their independence and intention to form...the Caucasian Confederation." This confederation was presented in the statement as a part of the future "Russian Republican Union," counting as the prospective subjects of the confederation "four governments, namely, Circassia, Dagestan, Georgia, and the Southeast Caucasus." "Circassia" and "Dagestan" here obviously were the expanded designations of the northwestern Caucasus (historic Circassia, Abkhazia, Kabarda, and possibly Ossetia) and the northeastern

Caucasus (Dagestan and Chechnya), respectively, while "Southeast Caucasus" referred to territories populated in a largely overlapping manner by Azerbaijanis and Armenians. A sizable portion of the document discussed the future of the "Kuban-Black Sea Region," almost entirely cleansed of its native population in the nineteenth century, which was viewed as "the original historical homeland of one of the major peoples of the confederation, Circassians [Adiges, Abazins, and Abkhazians]." Despite the "enforced and...temporary" resettlement of the majority of the indigenous inhabitants of the area in the Ottoman Empire and the region's subsequent military-Cossack colonization by Russians and Ukrainians, it remained "an integral part of the country," to which all diaspora Circassians who wished could return. The "newcoming groups" who had been in a privileged position under tsarism could reside there only on the condition that they recognize the principle that "the Caucasus belongs primarily to Caucasians" and "unify their destiny" with the local peoples. In addition they had to consent to proportional redistribution of land in favor of the mountaineers, including expected repatriates, "as a compensation for the national tragedy that they had endured."63

Despite the obvious attempt to revive pan-Caucasian tendencies under the umbrella of the SUC, the organization clearly was inclined to express primarily the ethno-national aspirations of North Caucasians and especially northwestern Caucasians, who formed its main body. The principle of confederation with South Caucasians remained more a part of the strategy chosen to achieve and subsequently assert independence than a manifestation of common Caucasian identity. Continuing confusion over the Ottoman notion of the exact composition, boundaries, and political status of the projected confederation undoubtedly was a source of concern for the Circassian nationalists and at the same time an impetus to articulate their own alternatives in a timely fashion. In this connection the attempt by the authors of the statement to divide the northwestern and the northeastern Caucasus within the anticipated confederation seems nonrandom. The design probably was to protect more secular and potentially Istanbul- and Western-oriented "Circassia" against the influence of more conservative "Dagestan," which was receptive to Islamist and partly Turanist ideas.⁶⁴

In parallel with the activities of the SUC and other Istanbul-based Caucasian associations lobbying efforts were undertaken by some members of the Circassian traditional nobility living in the provinces. An example of this can be seen in the letter sent on January 29, 1918, by

Mehmed Emin Bey "from the former chiefs of the Circassian tribes Barakay, Shegerey, and Bag," at that time residing in Eskişehir, to the head of the Ottoman delegation at Brest-Litovsk, prime minister Talat Paşa. 65 After a reminder of the calamities that had fallen to the share of the Circassians at the hands of invaders, the appeal continued with a request for Russia's recognition of the independence of the Caucasus under the protection of the Porte and its allies. The author insisted on prohibition of settlement of non-native groups in Circassia and a guarantee to any diaspora Circassians who wished to return to their homeland within the next 99 years of the right to restitution of the lands that had been granted to Russian landlords and peasants. Like the SUC statement noted above, Mehmed Emin Bey's application suggested that the northern border of the Caucasian state, separating it from Russia, should be drawn along the line between Astrakhan and Rostov-on-Don, within the maximum possible "historic" confines. 66 Both documents suggest that the Circassian nationalists, in order to underpin their claim for independence, had begun to appeal more actively to the thesis of self-determination being furthered, albeit in very different interpretations, by the Bolsheviks and by the United States and Great Britain.

In January 1918 the SUC determined to strengthen its activities to promote the idea of Caucasian independence in Europe, planning to issue its own newspaper in French (in Switzerland) with the financial support of the Special Organization. The editorial board of the publication was to include well-known figures of the Circassian movement such as the SUC's chair Yusuf Suad Bey, Aziz Bey, Ahmed Lütfullah Bey, Namık İsmail Bey, and Mehmed Şamil Bey. ⁶⁷ These efforts, however, did not yield any real results for reasons that are not clear. The SUC's attempts to assure inclusion of Circassian representatives in the Ottoman delegation to Brest-Litovsk proved fruitless as well, mostly due to the vigorous opposition of the Soviet side. ⁶⁸

After these failures, around February 1918 the SUC illegally transferred many of its activists to the northwestern Caucasus, including Yusuf Suad Bey, Aziz Bey, and several others (mostly regular or conscripted reserve officers), whose task it was to establish direct contact with local national forces. Although some of them soon had to return, others, such as Yusuf Suad Bey and his brother Ali, were able to gain a foothold in their ancestral homeland, engaging in propagandistic, political, and organizational work in support of the autonomy of Circassia and provision of the right of repatriation for compatriots living abroad.

SHAPING OF THE YOUNG TURK-CIRCASSIAN-MOUNTAINEER UNITY

The first direct contacts between members of the CUP administration and representatives of the North Caucasian national movement that took place at the Trabzon Peace Conference gave new impetus to the Caucasus-oriented activities of both Ottoman authorities and Circassian politicians. The conference participants included delegations of the Porte and the recently created Transcaucasian Federation (consisting of Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia). On March 13, 1918, the day before the opening of the conference, the head of the Ottoman delegation, Circassian Lt. Col. Hüseyin Rauf Bey (Orbay), the chief of staff of the navy, met with several Dagestanis who were represented within the Transcaucasian delegation, trying to obtain firsthand information about the situation in the North Caucasus.⁷¹ The Dagestani delegates assured Hüseyin Rauf Bey of the almost absolute predominance of pro-Ottoman attitudes among Caucasian Muslims and their willingness to rely on the assistance of Istanbul in their struggle for independence.⁷²

These talks paved the way for the establishment of the Ottomans' direct contacts with an official delegation of the UCMA Central Executive Committee (the so-called Mountaineers Government), consisting of Abdul-Mejid Chermoev, Haydar Bammatov, and Magomed-Kadi Dibirov, which arrived in Trabzon on April 1. After discussing North Caucasian problems with Hüseyin Rauf, they had the opportunity to meet with Enver Paşa, Talat Paşa, and other members of the cabinet as well as with Sultan Mehmed V. Throughout the negotiations the mountaineer delegates unequivocally indicated their readiness to seek separation of the North Caucasus from Russia and its entry into a confederative union with Transcaucasia under an Ottoman protectorate, asking for military, economic, and political support for their movement.⁷³ From the first days of this visit members of the Circassian diaspora had also been in close touch with the UCMA's envoys, assisting them with their tasks. For example, shortly after the arrival of the delegation in Istanbul a faction of eminent military leaders and bureaucrats, representing various North Caucasian ethnic groups, presented to Enver Paşa and Talat Paşa a memorandum requesting them to grant the Mountaineers Government's appeal for aid.74

A new organization, the Society of the North Caucasus (SNC), was established during the delegation's stay in the capital in April 1918. Its

purpose was to assure more effective coordination among the authorities, Circassian diaspora activists, and mountaineer leaders in the implementation of a concerted and common Caucasian strategy. Hüseyin Tosun Bey, the director of the Ottoman National Telegraph Agency, was elected the president of the society, though Fuad Paşa played a significant role. Some of the other members of the SNC were navy minister (since October 1918) Hüseyin Rauf Bey; interior minister (since late July 1918) İsmail Canbulad Bey; member of the CUP Central Committee Hüseyin Kadri Bey; governor-generals Bekir Sami Bey, Mehmed Reşid Bey, and Zekeriya Zihni Bey; generals Yusuf İzzet Paşa, İsa Ruhi Paşa, Ahmed Hamdi Paşa, and Ahmed Fevzi Paşa; Lt. Col. İsmail Hakkı Bey (Berkok); professor Aziz Bey; and others.⁷⁵ Thus, as compared with the previous Caucasian organizations, the representation of the acting imperial bureaucratic, military, and party elite in this society was visibly strengthened. Despite its status as a public organization, the SNC, like the earlier CIC, CNCPET, and SUC, was in fact a rather closed structure brought to life by the specific political circumstances of the time and was directly overseen and funded by Enver and Talat.⁷⁶

At first the society mainly mediated between the administration and delegates from the North Caucasus. It also provided the mountaineer leaders with ways to contact the imperial mass media and influential policy centers in order to achieve the widest possible support for the North Caucasians' claims in Ottoman public opinion. For example, the SNC was instrumental in organizing the mountaineer delegation's visit to the headquarters of the Turkish Hearth Society and in the publication of a series of articles sympathetic to the North Caucasian cause in the leading Istanbul newspapers. The SNC often came forth with its own suggestions for the mainstream of the Porte's Caucasus policy, trying to contribute to its further radicalization. According to some accounts, after lobbying maneuvers by the SNC's high-ranking members (particularly Hüseyin Rauf Bey) the CUP leaders provided a formal guarantee of recognition of North Caucasian independence by Istanbul to the Mountaineers Government delegation.

Immediately after receiving these guarantees, on May 11, 1918, Chermoev and Bammatov (as the prime minister and foreign minister of the Mountaineers Government, respectively) signed and sent to the Porte and foreign missions a declaration on the establishment of the independent North Caucasian Republic (NCR).⁷⁹ The nominal boundaries of the NCR, in full conformity with the aspirations of the diaspora, included all areas of the mass Circassian exodus and subsequent Russian

colonization of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.⁸⁰ A day later the mountaineer delegates passed a special appeal to the Ottoman leaders requesting that they provide urgent assistance "to the Muslims of the North Caucasus" by sending "a sufficient number of regular armed forces by any means and in any way" to the region.⁸¹ At the same time Chermoev and Bammatov insisted that Istanbul's plan in the Caucasus should be developed by skilled professionals, while the personnel sent there by the Special Organization should be people with a good knowledge of the country and its population.⁸²

Thanks to the targeted measures undertaken by Hüseyin Tosun Bey, the declaration of the North Caucasian independence occupied a noticeable place in not only the Ottoman but also the German and Austrian press. Regardless of protests from the Soviet side and the fact that the Mountaineers Government was only in control of a small fraction of its nominal territory (mainly the mountainous districts of Dagestan and Chechnya), the Porte recognized the newly proclaimed state. On June 8 at Batum a treaty of friendship and mutual assistance was signed by the Ottoman state, pledging to provide military assistance to the NCR to protect it from external threats and ensure the internal order and security of the country. Assistance was signed by the country.

Having secured the unambiguous support of the Porte, the Mountaineers Government and the diaspora circles cooperating with it expected Istanbul's partners in the alliance to render their assistance to the NCR. Moreover, in the course of their contacts with the representatives of the Central Powers in the summer of 1918, the North Caucasian politicians sometimes privately stressed their preference for a German-Austrian patronage rather than an Ottoman one, referring to the assurances of German support given to Fuad Paşa in 1914-15. The Germans, however, did not consider themselves bound by any obligations to the diaspora and mountaineer leaders, especially considering that they had failed to organize a large-scale rebellion in the Caucasus during the war. Having wagered on Georgia in its Caucasus policy, Germany not only did not agree to provide military and diplomatic assistance to the NCR but at times tried to prevent the Ottomans' moves in that direction.85 Berlin's attitude apparently forced North Caucasians to step up their contacts with official Vienna. In early July Fuad Paşa and Hüseyin Tosun Bey transmitted a memorandum to the Austro-Hungarian representatives in Istanbul, drawing their attention to the strategic importance of recognizing the NCR with the widest possible borders in order to contain future Russian expansion to the south. Moreover, the NCR would separate

Russia from Christian Armenia and Georgia, both of which "had declared independence only under the pressure of the Turkish army" and "at the earliest opportunity would again turn to Russia" if not properly insulated by the North Caucasian "barrier." The authors of the document further asserted that during the war 200,000 Circassians (including former prisoners of war) fought in the ranks of the Ottoman army "against their eternal enemy Russia," whereas the Georgians did not manifest any anti-Russian fervor. ⁸⁶ It very soon became apparent, however, that the hopes pinned on these initiatives were groundless and that the real international support for the North Caucasians' struggle was basically limited to the CUP leadership.

CIRCASSIANS AND THE OTTOMAN MILITARY INTERVENTION IN THE NORTH CAUCASUS

As early as May 12, 1918, Enver Paşa ordered the beginning of practical preparations by Ottoman units to depart for the North Caucasus. The beginning of June an "organizational battalion" was transferred from Azerbaijan to mountainous areas of Dagestan. This battalion was staffed by officers and noncommissioned officers and led by a member of the SNC: Lt. Col. İsmail Hakkı Bey. His aides were two other Circassian officers: Midhat Bey and Muzaffer Bey (Tuğsavul). The group's task was to establish national military and administrative structures in the region in collaboration with the Mountaineers Government's followers and set the stage for the entry of the main Ottoman forces. This activity also would show the local population the seriousness of Istanbul's intentions in the Caucasus. During the summer the battalion managed to organize the mountaineer militia detachments and reinforce "legitimate" authorities in a number of districts in south Dagestan. Se

The activities of the CUP leadership and the Circassian political elite in the North Caucasus reached their culmination in August 1918 after the start of the long-awaited Ottoman Caucasian campaign, carried out by the Caucasian Islamic Army under the command of Enver Paşa's stepbrother, Nuri Paşa. ⁸⁹ The campaign involved the most combat-ready Ottoman divisions, withdrawn from other fronts, and a certain number of local Azerbaijani and Dagestani volunteers. After the September 15 seizure of Baku by this group, its affiliated 1st Caucasian (North Caucasian) Corps continued the march north and by early November had cleared the forces of Cossack colonel Lazar Bicherakhov (who had shortly before displaced the Bolsheviks) from the territory of Dagestan.

Only after that could the Mountaineers Government headed by Chermoey return home and take up its duties. Without going into the specific details of this operation, 90 we should note that the Ottoman troops engaged in the Caucasus included a large proportion of Circassians, as at the beginning of the war. The higher-level officers were the commander of the 1st Caucasian Corps, Yusuf İzzet Paşa; his second-in-command and later commander of the forces of the mountaineer volunteers, Akif Bey (Erdemgil); corps chief of staff İsmail Hakkı Bey; the commander of the 15th Infantry Division, Süleyman İzzet Bey (Yeğinsü); the commander of the 5th Caucasian Division, Mürsel Bey (Baku); the commander of the 9th Caucasian Regiment, Cemil Cahid Bey (Toydemir); and others. At the same time Yusuf İzzet Paşa was appointed political and military representative of the Porte to the NCR. 91 İsmail Hakkı Bey was appointed as chief military advisor of the Mountaineers Government, responsible for the formation of its army.⁹² These assignments were undoubtedly informed by the Ottoman leaders' known manipulation of the Circassian factor in their Caucasian policy. Yusuf İzzet Paşa later remarked that he was sent to the North Caucasus mostly because he was a descendant of a Circassian immigrant family and enjoyed a reputation among his compatriots as the author of several books on Caucasian history. 93 The diasporic political elite, grouped mainly around the SNC, also played a role in the selection of candidates for participation in this expedition.⁹⁴

According to the concerted plan of the CUP leadership, diaspora nationalists, and mountaineer politicians, the forceful establishment of the Mountaineers Government's jurisdiction in Dagestan was to be followed by "liberation from hostile elements" of the rest of the North Caucasus up to Circassia and Abkhazia. 95 That would mean the actual implementation of the project of the NCR in its historically and geographically substantiated limits and at the same time the completion of construction of the full-fledged "Caucasian barrier" against Russia. In the summer of 1918, in parallel with the campaign in the eastern Caucasus, another operation involving the Ottoman military and intended to support the idea of the unified and independent North Caucasus took place on the western flank of the region. It started with the landing near Sukhum of a force of more than two hundred men, almost entirely Ottoman Abkhazians, who had formally retired from the regular army and declared themselves a unit of NCR's armed forces. This group was headed by senior air force lieutenant Cemal Sami Bey. 96 Its purpose was to guard Abkhazia (which since 1917 had been positioning itself as a part of the North Caucasian ethno-cultural and political unity) against the claims of Georgia.⁹⁷ The

operation was tacitly sanctioned by Enver Paşa and supervised by the headquarters of the 3rd Army in Batum. The members of the Mountaineers Government still sojourning in the Ottoman Empire and some prominent diaspora figures also were directly implicated in this endeavor. They launched a campaign in the Istanbul press and sent several appeals and deputations to the allied embassies to "elucidate" the right for Abkhazia to unify with the mountaineer peoples. The friendship treaty with Georgia signed earlier by the Porte, the employment of the main Ottoman forces in Azerbaijan and Dagestan, and Germany's vigorous political and military intervention on the side of Tiflis, however, did not allow the Young Turks to undertake more drastic action in that part of the Caucasus. From July to October the landing force, deprived of any significant support from those who had sent it, had to wage a guerrilla war against superior Georgian and German troops. In early November remnants of the party returned to Batum, though a sizable number of its members chose to remain in their ancestral land.98

ENDEAVORS OF THE CUP LEADERS AND CIRCASSIAN NATIONALISTS AFTER THE OTTOMAN COLLAPSE

This defeat obviously did not necessarily mean the end of the Ottoman and North Caucasian fight for Abkhazia. In the event of successful completion of the operation in the eastern Caucasus the issue of expanding the boundaries of the mountaineers' state toward the Black Sea could well be on the agenda again. Yet the sharp deterioration of the Ottoman armies on the other fronts in autumn 1918 did not leave much chance for the implementation of such a plan. On October 14, at the height of the battles for Dagestan, Talat Paşa's cabinet resigned in the face of imminent defeat in the war. On October 30, a week before the taking of Petrovsk (the major town of Dagestan) by Yusuf İzzet Paşa's corps, the new government signed the terms of armistice dictated by the Entente powers, which stipulated the withdrawal of Ottoman forces from the Caucasus.

This was preceded by a series of political maneuvers by the CUP leaders aimed at ensuring the viability of the NCR even if it was stranded from direct support from the outside. These maneuvers reiterated once more the seriousness of Ottoman plans in the region. For example, in his last telegram to Nuri Paşa, sent on October 15, Enver Paşa recommended that if Istanbul issued a command for withdrawal the troops should be put under the formal jurisdiction of the republics of Azerbaijan and North Caucasus, thus preserving the Ottoman military presence there. ¹⁰⁰

Interestingly, a few days later this instruction was confirmed by the cabinet of Ahmed İzzet Paşa, whereupon Nuri and Yusuf İzzet resigned from the Ottoman army and took up the positions of chiefs of the armed forces of Azerbaijan and the North Caucasus, respectively. Many of their subordinates also entered into military contracts with these republics. Only after a note from British headquarters demanding strict observance of the armistice terms were the Istanbul authorities forced to give an unequivocal order to evacuate all their units from the occupied Caucasian territories. Even after that Yusuf İzzet Paşa single-handedly attempted to delay this process by entering into a futile correspondence with the commander of the British troops in Baku, Gen. William Thomson, in the hope of extending the stay of the Ottoman military in Dagestan as long as possible. Only at the end of November 1918 did Yusuf İzzet's forces depart for Anatolia. 102

The CUP leaders' attempt to manipulate the Entente toward a more favorable attitude to the NCR is also noteworthy. In his October 22 telegram to Circassian Fuad Selim Bey, the Ottoman ambassador in Switzerland, Enver Paşa asked him to provide support in establishing contacts with the missions of the victorious powers to the delegation of the Mountaineers Government, which intended to go to Europe. The delegation was composed of NCR's foreign minister Bammatov and Aziz Bey as a representative of Circassian diaspora. Enver Paşa also instructed Fuad Selim to find out before the arrival of the delegation whether the British government would agree to recognize the NCR on terms of its entry into the anti-Soviet coalition and concession of the right to exploit the natural resources of the North Caucasus in the future to the English. 103 This delegation, which arrived in Switzerland in late November, received 10,000 Ottoman liras of financial aid from Enver Paşa for the advocacy of North Caucasian independence in the West. Using this money, Bammatov and Aziz Bey published a number of propagandistic books, pamphlets, maps, and so forth in the next months. 104

PURSUIT OF BRITISH PATRONAGE

The collapse of the CUP regime, capitulation of the Ottoman state, and occupation of a significant part of its territory by the Entente armies forced the Circassian elite to generate new strategies and find new partners to implement its goals. The first authorities to whom these circles considered it possible to appeal in the emerging new geopolitical conditions were the victorious powers and above all Great Britain. As early as

November 24, 1918, a Circassian delegation headed by Fuad Paşa handed a lengthy memorandum in French to the British High Commission in Istanbul addressed to the UK government, setting out the "desiderata" of North Caucasians living both in the Middle East and in the homeland. ¹⁰⁵ This document was drawn up without the influence and involvement of Ottoman administration or other external factors, so it can be deemed an objective and frank expression of the contemporary political agenda of the Circassian diaspora movement.

The appeal voiced a hope for the consideration ("according to the principle of nationalities") of the North Caucasian question at the forthcoming peace conference. After reminding the English of their sympathetic attitude toward the Circassians during the Russo-Caucasian War, the authors of the document asked London to recognize the independence of the North Caucasus. In addition, the document asked that the region from Abkhazia to Dagestan be placed under a British protectorate in order to allow the mountaineers to concentrate on the construction of their own state institutions and development of the economy. The complete independence of the country could only be proclaimed after it gained "a stable and regular viability." To that end the Circassians asked London to take immediate military steps to free the Bolshevik-occupied areas of the North Caucasus. The memorandum listed the measures undertaken by mountaineer politicians to institutionalize their nationhood after the fall of tsarism yet passed over their recent close contacts with the Ottomans and Germans. To solve the problem of the Circassian diaspora, the British government was asked to provide assistance to the "one and a half million Circassians located in Turkey" but "still possessing relations and indestructible attachments in North Caucasia" in "return to their country of origin" and "restitution of the usurped lands." The satisfaction of these demands could turn the North Caucasus into "a vanguard... of English civilizing influence in the South." 106

This petition received some support from the High Commission and over the next few months was pending in government offices in London. An expert opinion was prepared in early April 1919 by future renowned historian Arnold Toynbee (then an employee of a Secret Office of War Propaganda of the Foreign Office). Despite his expression of sympathy for the plight and struggle of the Circassians, he considered it inadmissible to encourage them to repatriate because such a policy "would be resisted not only by the local Russians, but by the Russian state [that is, the Entente-backed White governments and armies]" and inevitably result in even greater instability in the Caucasus. According to Toynbee, the

diaspora Circassians were to remain in the Middle East and play an important part in the Allies' interests there, "if the Ottoman countries were regenerated under the mandatory system." ¹⁰⁷

On January 29, 1919, when the leaders of the Mountaineers Government were at Istanbul on their way to the Paris Peace Conference, the diaspora organizations turned to the Entente states with a request to permit their representatives to leave for Versailles to inform the conference on the Circassian issue. The delegation was supposed to include Bekir Sami Bey, Ahmed Hamdi Paşa, and İsa Ruhi Paşa, as well as secretaries Hidayet İsmail Bey (the son of Marshal Fuad Paşa) and Ahmed Lütfullah Bey. This attempt to find favor with the Allies, however, ended in failure. The conference did not consider it necessary for the North Caucasian delegates to attend its proceedings in person. 108

The reason for the cool attitude of the British toward the overtures of the diaspora politicians was not only the discrepancy between their claims and the plans of the victorious powers in the Middle East and the southern part of the former Russian Empire. It was of no less importance that the Allies strongly associated the Circassian committees and societies with Young Turk rule and perceived them as a legal continuation of the self-dissolved CUP. Moreover, some of the Circassian leaders were suspected of being involved in rather grave wartime crimes. Thus in November 1918 Mehmed Reşid Bey and Zekeriya Zihni Bey were arrested on the charge of planning killings of Armenians in the Diyarbakır province and the deportation of the Greeks from the Edirne province, respectively. In late January 1919 the same fate befell Hüseyin Tosun Bey, the chair of the SNC, as well as Hüseyin Kadri Bey and İsmail Canbulad Bey, who were all arrested as prominent functionaries of the old regime. 109 The attempts by the SNC to position itself as a nonpolitical sociocultural organization loyal to the new Istanbul authorities could not change the situation. In June 1919 it was disbanded without prior arrangement by the British military and police. 110

ATTEMPTS TO MOVE THE NORTH CAUCASIAN ISSUE ONTO THE KEMALIST AGENDA

After mid-1919 the main focus for the North Caucasian diasporic elite became the national movement under the direction of Mustafa Kemal Paşa that started in the Anatolian inland. The vast majority of Circassian activists pinned their hopes on the continuation of the previous regime's Caucasian policy in some form, including the implementation of

coherent steps aimed at influencing current developments in the Caucasus. This circumstance in part accounts for the visible representation of members of the Circassian military and civil bureaucracy, including those with an apparent ethno-nationalist background, in the governing structures of the Kemalist movement in its initial stage. It is noteworthy that some of them (including Bekir Sami Bey, Hüseyin Rauf Bey, and Yusuf İzzet Paşa) did not exclude the possibility of reaching a compromise between Turkey and the Entente on the creation of an independent Caucasian confederation including both the north and the south within the framework of the postwar settlement in the Middle East. 111

These views, however, were at odds with the pragmatic geostrategic concept of Mustafa Kemal Paşa, for whom the Caucasus region appeared to be not a possible object of bargaining with the Entente powers but primarily a link between struggling Anatolia and its only potential external ally at that moment, Soviet Russia. As early as February 1920 Mustafa Kemal sent an analytical paper to the members of the Anatolian military-political leadership. He pointed out that the Entente plans to turn the newly proclaimed independent Caucasian republics into a barrier between Turkey and Russia were a menace for the Turkish national movement and even allowed, as a last resort, the possibility of a joint military operation with the Bolsheviks to frustrate such a scenario. This message, however, by no means received unanimous and unconditional support from its addressees. At the same time Mustafa Kemal undoubtedly supported "careful consideration of the interests of Azerbaijan and the North Caucasus" in relations with the Soviet leadership.

Some ambiguity of the Kemalist approach to the Caucasian issues at this stage could not help but encourage the efforts of Circassian nationalists to facilitate Ankara's interest in supporting the liberation movement in their homeland. An example of this was the political, military, and intelligence mission dispatched in February 1920 by the leaders of the disbanded SNC to the North Caucasus at the request of the Tiflis-based Mountaineers Government in Exile. This dispatch was sanctioned and organizationally supported by the Istanbul government as well as by some figures of the Anatolian movement. İsmail Hakkı Bey, Aziz Bey, and Mustafa Şahin Bey (Butbay) formed the delegation, along with several military instructors to train the national armed units on the spot. 114 The objectives of the mission were "to ensure the independence of the North Caucasus and bring this independence to conformity with the interests of the Ottoman state." 115

During the following three-plus months the members of this group spent their time in the highlands of Dagestan, Chechnya, and Ingushetia,

still beyond the control of the Soviet authorities, taking on efforts aimed at consolidating heterogeneous forces that supported resuscitation of an independent NCR at their own risk. The practical outcome of this activity was the May 6, 1920, convocation near the Chechen village of Vedeno of the National Mejlis of the North Caucasus (with participation mostly from Chechens), which adopted a declaration to defend the mountaineers' independence against the encroachments of the Bolsheviks. 116 The Mejlis, which was intended by its organizers to become a "legitimate core" of the revived statehood of the mountaineers, addressed an appeal to Muhammed Kamil Paşa (the son of Imam Shamil) in Medina to head the struggle. In response the paşa sent his nineteen-year-old son Mehmed Said Bey to the Caucasus, along with several Transjordanian Chechens and Adiges. This group reached the North Caucasus via Georgia in October 1920 and played a significant role in the military and ideological guidance of Shari^ca rebel forces in Chechnya and Dagestan, at least until March 1921. After the Bolsheviks' final suppression of the uprising Mehmed Said and most of his companions managed to return home. 117

Despite the relative success of İsmail Hakkı Bey and Aziz Bey's mission, its members managed to gain a real foothold mostly among the local feudal and clerical circles. Being unable to meet their expectations of more significant assistance from Turkey, the group chose to refrain from personal involvement in the armed revolt brewing up in Chechnya. In early June 1920 they fled to Georgia, trying in vain to obtain recognition and financial and military-technical support for the National Mejlis from the Entente representatives. 118 On their return to Anatolia in late July, İsmail Hakkı Bey and Aziz Bey submitted a report to Mustafa Kemal that objectively described the complex social and political condition of the North Caucasus. 119 At the same time, without openly questioning the validity of the Kemalist course toward strategic alliance between Ankara and Moscow, they tried to overemphasize the potential impact that the mountaineers' attitudes could have on these relationships: "in the event of disregard for the national aspirations of Caucasians" (which implied independence from Russia) the region would inevitably suffer a massive rebellion against the Bolsheviks, thus posing an obstacle for Russian aid to Anatolia. The existence of independent and friendly North Caucasian and Azerbaijani states, on the contrary, would facilitate transport communication between the Kemalists and Bolsheviks and strengthen the international position of Turkey. Based on this vision of the situation, the report suggested that a special mission "representing the interests of the peoples of the North Caucasus" should instantly be sent to Moscow. This mission would "track the North Caucasian affairs" and properly instruct

the Kemalist governmental delegation led by foreign minister Bekir Sami Bey, which had recently left for Russia to establish diplomatic relations with the Soviet state.¹²⁰

FINAL DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS OF THE CIRCASSIAN NATIONALISTS IN RUSSIA AND EUROPE

Although these proposals did not receive the support of Ankara leadership, some steps that the head of the delegation, Bekir Sami Bey, took in Moscow in fact pursued the same aims, which generally did not fit well with the powers given to him by the parliament. During the Turkish-Soviet negotiations held in August 1920, Bekir Sami regularly communicated in private with local North Caucasians. Moreover, during a confidential meeting with the people's commissar for foreign affairs, Georgy Chicherin, in the last days of August he brought up the issue of granting independence to the North Caucasus, which naturally was rejected by the head of Soviet diplomacy. It is important to take into account, however, that this proposal was put forward by Bekir Sami after Chicherin's claim for concession of some Turkish eastern territories in favor of Armenia, which was then on the threshold of Sovietization.¹²¹

In early September, just after initialing the Turkish-Russian treaty of friendship and mutual assistance, ¹²² Bekir Sami did not return with his delegation to Anatolia but instead set off on a private trip to the North Caucasus (on the pretext of meeting with his relatives in Vladikavkaz) with permission (though obviously against the wishes) of the Soviet authorities. In autumn 1920 Bekir Sami Bey visited Ossetia, Ingushetia, Chechnya, and Dagestan, where he was noticed by Bolshevik authorities meeting with members of the mountaineer insurgency and conducting anti-Soviet agitation. ¹²³

Upon completion of this journey Bekir Sami sent a lengthy letter to Chicherin in which he shared his impressions about what he had seen and heard. It stated, inter alia, that the Caucasus had been immersed in an atmosphere of terror since the establishment of Soviet power there: "no one was sure of the safety of life and property" and people were arrested and murdered and their houses plundered on the slightest denunciation. According to Bekir Sami, "the existing system of deterrence was giving rise only to popular discontent..., turning the mountaineers into sworn enemies of the Soviet power." The letter further argued that the mountaineers were seeking political independence and that the Bolsheviks had no choice but to provide it, because otherwise the Caucasian

counter-revolution would be used by the Entente in its anti-Russian interests. At the same time the Turkish minister claimed that, if free popular representation was implemented by the Bolsheviks, a "Caucasian Soviet Republic" could maintain close military and economic ties with Soviet Russia, remaining a part of a "greater Soviet federation." ¹²⁴

Only at the end of January 1921 did Bekir Sami return to Ankara, but not until he had secretly met in Tiflis with the foreign minister of the Mountaineers Government in Exile, Bammatov, promising to achieve the maximum possible Kemalist assistance for the mountaineers. Bekir Sami then negotiated with Entente representatives in Georgia, offering, in return for the Entente softening its policy toward the Kemalists and recognition of independent Caucasian confederation, to secure Turkey's entry into the Little Entente, an anti-Soviet coalition of several East European states forming under the aegis of France. 125

At the London Conference on the Middle East in March 1921, Bekir Sami once again touched upon this subject in an informal conversation with Lloyd George, trying to convince him of the benefits (for the West) of creating a confederal state under Turkish control within the North and South Caucasus. This state would perform the role of a barrier against the spread of Bolshevism and, if necessary, a military springboard against Soviet Russia. 126 At a time when Entente leaders were by no means inclined to compromise with Ankara, however, such projects simply were not feasible. As a result the backstage maneuvers of Bekir Sami Bey, which opposed the foreign policy of Mustafa Kemal and caused strong protests from the Soviet side, ended up being one of the main reasons for his resignation from the post of foreign minister in May of the same year. 127 It is clear that from the beginning of his role as the head of Kemalist foreign policy Bekir Sami had been attempting to combine his direct duties with a parallel mission relating to the solution of Caucasian problems in line with the known purposes of the Circassian political elite. These steps were undoubtedly to a certain extent agreed upon and coordinated in that milieu.

It is noteworthy in this context that the first Turkish embassy that arrived in Moscow in February 1921 included a conspicuous number of Circassians, who enjoyed the support of their compatriots in the Ankara government and parliament as well as of the head of this mission, Ali Fuad Paşa (Cebesoy). Thus Aziz Bey was appointed first secretary, Zeki Bey second secretary, Tahsin Rüşdü Bey (Baj) chief treasurer, and Mehmed Fuad Bey (Carim) consul general to Moscow and then Kazan. The staff of the embassy would also include a "representative for the North

Caucasus" (along with similar missions for Azerbaijan and Georgia). Col. Bekir Sami Bey (Günsav) was appointed. ¹²⁹ For reasons that are not completely clear he never left for Russia. ¹³⁰

According to available evidence, these persons displayed heightened interest in their homeland during their service in Russia, maintaining close contacts with old-regime Caucasian intellectuals. They obviously sought to find opportunities for political actualization of the issue of Caucasian independence internationally. All of this caused discontent not only among the Soviet authorities but within leadership in Ankara as well, giving Dr. Rıza Nur, who became the foreign minister in the end of 1922, the opportunity to blame Aziz Bey and his above-mentioned colleagues for "turning the Turkish embassy into a Circassian committee." During the 1923–24 period, in parallel with elimination of the last pockets of separatism in the North Caucasus and strengthening of the pragmatic Soviet-Turkish cooperation, almost all of them were recalled from the USSR.¹³¹

CONCLUSION

The activities of Circassian intellectuals, politicians, public figures, and diplomats examined here constituted an expression of a very specific diasporic nationalism. Unlike the great majority of non-Turkish national ideologies in the empire, nascent Circassian nationalism was not of a centrifugal but of a centripetal character, being focused simultaneously on two tasks and sometimes oscillating between them. These tasks involved obtaining the conditions for the cultural survival and advancement of North Caucasians in their adopted country and regaining the lost "true homeland" with its presumed subsequent alliance in some form with the Ottoman/Turkish state (but not excluding other options of foreign protection). In the first years of the Second Constitutional period the efforts of Circassian activists had a sociocultural orientation, while after the summer of 1914 they brought to the forefront in their work the goal of "liberating the Caucasus" as a prerequisite for the reintegration of Middle Eastern Circassians with the "parent" ethnicities of the North Caucasus.

If we are to evaluate the actions of the Circassian elite during World War I in practical terms, we should admit that they were rigidly bound to the external course of the CUP. The CUP could rather easily exploit the ethno-political aspirations of North Caucasians in the direction of its own military and political objectives. It appears, for example, that the Ottoman government departments (the war and foreign offices, but

above all the Special Organization) were drawing on the intellectual, informational, political, and operational capacities of the members of the Circassian community for the development and implementation of their Caucasian strategy.

Nonetheless, it is hardly reasonable to consider the people involved in this activity and the formal structures created by them to be a mere tool for the implementation of the regime's designs. The Circassian leaders, after having agreed to close collaboration with the CUP administration (albeit as an apparently subordinate party), evidently used its expansionist ambitions and certain parts of the international conjuncture for accelerated furtherance of the (North) Caucasian issue into the agenda of the Porte, its allies, and Western public opinion in general. In light of this it is obvious that the ideologists of the Circassian committees and missions sought to represent the interests of the broad masses of diaspora North Caucasians rather than those of the ruling elite in the empire. It is worthwhile to recall that before World War I many members of those organizations had participated in the efforts aimed at the ethno-cultural and social revival of their compatriots, leaving an appreciable mark in this definitely patriotic field. Meanwhile a number of prominent Circassian politicians (Fuad Paşa, Hüseyin Tosun Bey, Yusuf Suad Bey, and others) for some time had been opposed to the CUP, partly owing to its limitation of democratic freedoms and minority rights.

In 1914–18 diaspora activists undoubtedly managed to attract the attention of certain domestic and foreign circles to the colonial status of their homeland and to the problem of Middle Eastern Circassians as a people in exile. They also played a role in the initial stage of the war in elaboration of the Porte's attitudes toward some important issues concerning the politics of the Caucasus. Specifically they aided in shaping the CUP diplomacy's Caucasian aspirations into a fundamental goal of creating a confederative and at least de jure independent state in the region. After 1917 they helped in establishing direct relations between Ottoman leaders and the United Caucasian Mountaineers Alliance as well as providing political and military support to the North Caucasian Republic.

At the same time it is clear that the Circassian nationalists' projects to change the political fate of their ancestral homeland for the most part inadequately correlated with contemporary sociopolitical conditions of the North Caucasus. Despite the CSUMA's efforts to establish cultural and other ties with their co-ethnics in the Caucasus, the Circassian elite lacked dependable channels of obtaining objective and comprehensive

information about the situation in the region. Instead they often relied on the limited and not always trustworthy data drawn from public or confidential Ottoman and foreign (especially German) sources and sometimes even on stereotypes of the Russo-Caucasian War and deportation era preserved in the collective memory of the diaspora. Thus Circassian activists, as well as their official partners, have overrated the degree of irreconcilability and antagonism of relations between the North Caucasian peoples and the Russian state, while ignoring the social, ideological, ethnic, religious, and other differences and contradictions within the mountaineer community itself. This community in turn was regarded as a much more consolidated and monolithic "national" entity than it might actually have been. Another exaggeration is the supposition that Muslims of the North Caucasus would retain a substantial pro-Ottoman feeling or a potential base for the rapid resuscitation of such sentiment. In reality, by the period under review the perception of the Ottoman Empire was highly ambiguous even in the areas traditionally more open to Istanbul's influence. This was due to the existence of a steady memory/view of the Porte's failure to provide proper aid to the mountaineers during the Russo-Caucasian War and lack of interest in them in subsequent decades. The most visible evidence of the inadequacy of these circles' representation of the realities of the Caucasus, this "second Macedonia" of the Young Turks, as defined by Tarık Zafer Tunaya, 132 was the expectation of a large-scale insurrection of North Caucasian peoples under the influence of Ottoman-German propaganda and isolated special operations. It is not a coincidence that the claim of independent statehood in the North Caucasus was formulated on the international platform, during the first years of war, almost exclusively by the diaspora, but not actually North Caucasian figures.

In essence, only after the 1917 revolutions in Russia was the Ottoman Circassian elite able to engage in active interaction with like-minded forces in the Caucasus. Even at this point, however, the diaspora leaders, as well as the officials in Istanbul, were undervaluing or preferring to disregard that the faction of the mountaineer national-democratic intelligentsia that acted as their partner (the Mountaineers Government and its associated circles) in actual fact represented just one segment of the fragmented and changeable ideological and political spectrum of the postrevolution North Caucasus. 133

In the period of armistice and the National Liberation Struggle in Anatolia Circassian politicians continued to take persistent though desperate steps of a military, propagandistic, and diplomatic nature designed to support the remnants of the independence movement in the North Caucasus. At the same time they sought to stimulate a more active and interventionist approach to the North Caucasian problems from first the Entente powers and then Ankara leaders. These efforts, however, could not prevent a final settlement in the Caucasus in the early 1920s, primarily in accordance with the needs and arrangements of the two major states concerned: Soviet Russia and Kemalist Turkey. The ultimate failure of the Caucasus-oriented plans of the diaspora nationalists signified the end of the phase of the Circassian elites' relatively intensive involvement in the affairs of their historic homeland, actuated in 1914 by World War I, as well as the end of their relevance as such to the Turkish and international policy-making centers.

NOTES

- 1. In line with the traditional Ottoman usage, the term "Circassian" is used in this chapter for the most part to define undifferentially all indigenous groups of the North Caucasus: Adiges (Circassians proper), Abazins, Ossetians, Chechens, Dagestanis, and so forth, as well as the ethno-culturally related South Caucasian Abkhazians. On the relations between the Ottoman Empire and the North Caucasus and peculiarities of the Ottomans' and Circassians' perceptions of each other in the classical and postclassical eras, see, for example, S. Yerasimos, "Türklerin Kafkasları: Egzotizmle Jeopolitik Arasında," *Toplumsal Tarih* 36 (1996) and 37 (1997); A. Toumarkine, "Katip Çelebi'nin Cihannüma'sında Abhazistan ve Çerkezistan: Kuzeybatı Kafkasya'ya Bir Osmanlı Bakışı," *Toplumsal Tarih* 40 (1997); S. M. Bilge, *Osmanlı Çağında Kafkasya (1454-1829): Tarih, Toplum, Ekonomi* (Istanbul: Kitabevi, 2012).
- 2. According to estimates, the number of Circassians in the Ottoman Empire at the turn of the nineteenth-twentieth centuries was no less than 1 million people. See A. Ubicini and A. P. de Courteille, *Etat présent de l'Empire ottoman*, 69; Kemal H. Karpat, *Ottoman Population (1830–1914)*, 190.
- 3. For a detailed account of Circassians' persecution and deportation from the Caucasus by Russia, see A. Kasumov and Kh. Kasumov, *Genotsid Adygov: Iz istorii bor'by adygov za nezavisimost' v 19 veke* (Nal'chik: Logos, 1992) (or its Turkish translation: A. Kasumov and H. Kasumov, *Çerkes Soykvrımı: Çerkeslerin 19. Yüzyıl Kurtuluş Savaşı Tarihi* [Ankara: Kaf-Der, 1995]); W. Richmond, *The Northwest Caucasus: Past, Present, Future* (London: Routledge, 2008). For the North Caucasian mountaineers' immigration and colonization in the Ottoman Empire, see A. Saydam, *Kırım ve Kafkasya Göçleri (1856–1876)*; S. Erkan, *Kırım ve Kafkasya Göçleri (1878–1908)*.
- Erkan, Kırım ve Kafkasya Göçleri, 197; [Tosun Hüseyin], 1. Dünya Savaşında Kuzey Kafkasyalılar, 14; Uzunyayla Rapor ve Belgeleri, 295.
- 5. See, for example, M. F. Şoenu, Çerkes Meselesi, 41-42.

- S.E. Berzeg, "1877–1878 Osmanlı-Rus Savaşında Kuzey Kafkasya ve Sürgündeki Kafkasyalılar"; H. S. Hotko, "Importance of Russian-Turkish War of 1877–1878 for the Circassian History," 224–26.
- 7. See Justin McCarthy, Ölüm ve Sürgün, 219; G. Chochiev and B. Koç, "Migrants from the North Caucasus in Eastern Anatolia: Some Notes on Their Settlement and Adaptation," *Journal of Asian History* 1 (2006): 98–100; Bilal N. Şimşir, ed., *British Documents on Ottoman Armenians*, vols. 1 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1982) and 2 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1983).
- 8. See the incomplete list of the founders of the society in V. Güsar, "Çerkes Teavun Cemiyeti (1908–1923)," 29; İ. Aydemir, *Muhaceretteki Çerkes Aydınları*, 120–21.
- For the ethno-national doctrine of the CSUMA, see its newspaper Guaze for 1911 and 1912.
- 10. Güsar, "Çerkes Teavun Cemiyeti," 30.
- 11. One of the active workers of the society, the renowned journalist Hasan Vasfi Bey (Amca), recalled later: "[H]ow could we have any goals and aspirations on the Ottoman map? Our homeland, the Caucasus, was outside its limits, and the most we could expect was help in the restoration of its independence. But in those days we could hardly even dream about it" (Alpay Kabacalı, Bir İhtilalcinin Serüvenleri, 117).
- 12. See *Guaze*, especially issues 19, 21, 27 for 1911 and 29, 37, 44 for 1912.
- 13. Güsar, "Çerkes Teavun Cemiyeti," 31-32.
- 14. Bekir Sami Bey was the son of Ossetian Musa (Paşa) Kundukhov, a general in the Russian and then Ottoman army. He graduated from Galatasaray Lyceum and the Paris Academy of Political Sciences. Until 1904 he was in the diplomatic service, including Ottoman consulates in Russia. Then he served as a governor-general in several provinces (S. E. Berzeg, Türkiye Kurtuluş Savaşı'nda Çerkes Göçmenleri, 34).
- 15. Muhammed Kamil Paşa was the youngest son of Imam Shamil. He arrived in the Ottoman Empire together with his father in 1870 at the age of eight, then served in the Ottoman army, mostly in the Arab provinces.

Muhammed Fazil Paşa was a brother-in-law of Imam Shamil's middle son, Gazi Muhammed Paşa. After graduating from military school and serving as an officer in Russia, he arrived in the Ottoman Empire in 1877. During the war of 1877–78 he commanded one of the North Caucasian immigrant cavalry units on the eastern front. After the war he became deputy commander of the Dagestani regiment in Abdülhamid II's personal guard. In 1882 he was accused of conspiring against the sultan and exiled to Iraq, where he rose to deputy commander of the 6th Army with the rank of *ferik* (lieutenant general). In March 1916 he was killed in the fighting at Kut-el-Amara (H. F. Dağıstanlı, *Bir Kahramanın Hayatı*).

- 16. M. Budak, "Kafkasya ve Osmanlı Devleti (16–20. Yüzyıllar)," 607.
- 17. Stanford J. Shaw, *The Ottoman Empire in World War I*, 1:441.
- 18. Pşimaf, "Çerkes Teavun Cemiyeti ve Guaze," 6−7.
- See Yusuf Hikmet Bayur, Türk İnkılabı Tarihi 2/4:84–87; M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, Preparation for a Revolution, 158–61.
- Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi/Prime Ministry Ottoman Archive, Istanbul (hereafter BOA), DH.EUM.EMN 91/15 (30.08.1914); E. L. Rogan, Frontiers of the State

- in the Late Ottoman Empire, 226–27; Sultan Murad, "The Jihad of Said Shamil and Sultan Murad for the Liberation of the Caucasus," 183.
- 21. Uzunyayla Rapor ve Belgeleri, 278-79.
- 22. It is indicative that many Circassians, who lived in the Russian-occupied Kars region (particularly in the district of Sarıkamış) and were Russian subjects, also voluntarily participated in intelligence and sabotage activities in favor of the Porte before and after the beginning of war, thus demonstrating the continuing priority of Ottoman-Muslim loyalty and identity for them (S. Kazmaz, Sarıkamış'ta Köy Gezileri: Halk Kültürü Alanında Araştırma ve İncelemeler [Ankara: Atatürk Kültür, Dil ve Tarih Yüksek Kurumu, 1995], 30, 278, 458).
- 23. By the beginning of the war Col. Yusuf İzzet Bey was the commander of the 2nd Cavalry Division of the 3rd Army. In early January 1915 he was appointed personally by Enver Paşa as the commander of the 10th Corps and promoted to brigadier general. In October 1916, as part of the reorganization of the 3rd Army, he headed its 1st Caucasian Corps. In autumn 1918 he led the Ottoman expedition to Dagestan (see below) (Edward J. Erickson, Ordered to Die, 59, 136; Ş. İlden, Sarıkamış, 53). Before the war Yusuf İzzet Bey was one of the key CSUMA members, heading its commission for the development of the Circassian alphabet. During 1914–18 he published a series of nonprofessional but quite erudite books on Caucasian history (S. E. Berzeg, Kafkas Diasporasında Yazarlar ve Edebiyatçılar Sözlüğü, 181–82).

Brig. Gen. Abdülkerim Paşa was the commander of the 11th Corps from 1914 to November 1916 and the acting commander of the 3rd Army in January–March 1916. He was subsequently transferred to the Balkan front (Erickson, *Ordered to Die* 107–8, 122, 127, 148). In 1918 he was appointed as the Ottoman diplomatic representative to Tiflis (K. A. Zalessky, *Pervaia Mirovaia Voina*, 411). According to some reports, while serving on the Caucasus front he deliberately drew Circassians from other units under his command. Shortly before Abdülkerim Paşa's death he bequeathed all his fortune to the future creator of the Circassian alphabet (F. Tonguç, *Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nda Bir Yedek Subayın Anıları*, 110).

- 24. M. Ünal, Kurtuluş Savaşında Çerkeslerin Rolü, 34.
- 25. M. Çolak, Alman İmparatorluğu'nun Doğu Siyaseti Çerçevesinde Kafkasya Politikası (1914–1918), 63; Shaw, The Ottoman Empire in World War I, 2:932, 1152.
- 26. BOA, DH.ŞFR 47/196 (26.10.1914).
- 27. Vartkes Yeghiayan, *The Armenian Genocide and the Trials of the Young Turks*, 71–72, 81–84; Tarık Zafer Tunaya, *Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler*, 3:348–49.
- 28. BOA, MV 195/28 (1.12.1914), 195/116 (3.01.1915). Among those given amnesty, for example, was Çerkez Selim Sami Bey (the younger brother of Kuşçubaşı Eşref, one of the key figures of the Special Organization) along with his 46-man gang that had been engaged in brigandage in the Aegean region since 1911 (S. Yetkin, *Ege'de Eşkıyalar* [Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1997], 178). During World War I Selim Sami performed important missions of the Special Organization in India and Central Asia (Shaw, *The Ottoman Empire in World War I*, vol. 2).
- 29. Berzeg, Türkiye Kurtuluş Savaşı'nda Çerkes Göçmenleri, 15. Interestingly, Çerkez Ethem Bey, the future controversial figure of the National Liberation War who a few years later suppressed Anzavur's revolt, at the end of 1914 was also present

- on the Caucasian front as a volunteer of the Special Organization ([Tunaya], *Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler*, 3:353).
- 30. Cemil Arif, Birinci Dünya Savaşında Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa, 41.
- 31. Sadık Sarısaman, "Trabzon Mıntıkası Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa Heyet-i İdaresinin Faaliyetleri ve Gürcü Lejyonu," 498, 501, 524; Hamit Pehlivanlı, "Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa," 290–91; Arif, *Birinci Dünya Savaşında Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa*.
- 32. Akdes Nimet Kurat, *Türkiye ve Rusya*, 500. What appears at first glance to be the exotic idea of placing the projected Caucasian state under the House of Osman has some rational "ethno-genealogical" basis, in addition to purely political motives, considering that since the mid-nineteenth century the mothers of almost all members of this dynasty were Circassian women. The sons sometimes were even able to speak their maternal tongue (for instance, Abdülhamid II). On the "familial" sympathies of Sultan Mehmed V with the North Caucasians, see N. Keykurun, *Azerbaycan İstiklal Mücadelesinin Hatıraları*, 72–73.
- Çolak, Alman İmparatorluğu'nun Doğu Siyaseti Çerçevesinde Kafkasya Politikası, 88–92.
- 34. Fuad Paşa was born in 1835 in Egypt to the family of Marshal Çerkez Hasan Refet Paşa. He served as an officer in the Egyptian army and then in the Ottoman army. During the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78 he was promoted to marshal and appointed deputy commander in chief. In subsequent years he was repeatedly sent to European countries, including Russia, with diplomatic missions. In 1902 he and Gazi Muhammed Paşa were accused of plotting to overthrow Abdülhamid II and exiled to Damascus, whence he returned after the 1908 revolution. In 1909 he was appointed by Mehmed V as a life member of the Senate. In 1911 Fuad Paşa was among the founders of the Freedom and Accord Party, working as its president until the end of 1912. Later he withdrew from active politics. In the last stage of the Balkan Wars he directed the defense of Istanbul. During World War I one of Fuad Paşa's sons, Hasan İslam Bey, was an adjutant to Talat Paşa. Another son, Esad Fuad, served as the secretary of the Ottoman Embassy in St. Petersburg in 1914 and for a short time was the chargé d'affaires of the Porte in Russia; later he repeatedly accompanied the heads of Ottoman cabinets (particularly Talat Paşa after he took up the post of grand vezir) on their foreign trips as an interpreter. Yet another of the sons of Fuad Paşa, Hulüsi Fuad, during this period worked in the Ottoman military medical missions in Germany and Austria-Hungary (S. E. Berzeg, Soçi'nin Sürgündeki Sahipleri Çerkes-Vubıhlar, 92–93, 96–97; Tunaya, Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler, 1:294, 311).
- 35. Hüseyin Tosun was a graduate of Galatasaray Lyceum and Higher Military School. For revolutionary activities he was exiled in 1896 to Tripolitania, whence he fled to Egypt and then to Europe. He was a delegate of the Young Turks' First Congress in Paris in 1902 and one of the founders of Prince Sabahaddin's Society for Individual Initiative and Decentralization. In 1907 he arrived in Erzurum via the Russian Caucasus (where he had become a Russian citizen) with the aim of organizing an anti-Hamidian uprising but was arrested and sentenced to life imprisonment. After the revolution he was close to the Liberal Party. During the Tripolitanian War Hüseyin Tosun fought as a volunteer against the Italians and spent some time in captivity in Rome. In 1912 he was elected to the parliament from Erzurum (Berzeg, Soçi'nin Sürgündeki Sahipleri Çerkes-Vubıhlar, 72; İdare, "Açıklama," 7).

- 36. A. Girgin, *Türkiye'de Yerel Basın*; S. 45; S. Balcı and M. Balcıoğlu, "İdealist Bir Mücadele Adamı," 5, 8. Prior to the abolition of the Special Organization Hüseyin Tosun served as its last director, from October 31 to November 15, 1918 (ibid., 8).
- 37. Güsar, "Çerkes Teavun Cemiyeti," 35, 36.
- 38. As early as the first days of August 1914, Enver Paşa informed the German ambassador at Istanbul, Hans von Wangenheim, of the development of the Ottoman plan of provoking uprisings in the Muslim world, from the Arab lands to Dagestan and "the Circassian region" (F. Yıldırım, "Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nda Kafkasya'da Türk-Alman Rekabeti," 30). In October the Caucasian Revolutionary Society, created within the Special Organization, addressed the Muslims of the Caucasus with a call "to hurl the accursed Russian government across the Caucasus Mountains" (Arif, Birinci Dünya Savaşında Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa, 33).
- 39. Kurat, Türkiye ve Rusya, 500.
- 40. W. Zürrer, "Almanya ve 1918 Yılında Kuzey Kafkasya'daki Gelişmeler," 69-71.
- 41. Ibid.
- 42. A. Turan, "Kafkasya Komitesi' ve 'Türkiye'deki Kuzey Kafkasya Siyasi Göçmenleri Komitesi' Üzerine Bazı Kaynaklar," 14–15; Gothard Jaeschke, "1916 Lozan Kongresi'nde Rusya Mahkumu Milletler," 17–18; Mustafa Balcıoğlu, *Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa'dan Cumhuriyet'e*, 177.
- Tosun, I. Dünya Savaşında Kuzey Kafkasyalılar, 15; Güsar, "Çerkes Teavun Cemiyeti," 34–35.
- 44. B. Bilatti, "Kuzey Kafkasya ve 11 Mayıs 1918," 175; Vahdet Keleşyılmaz, "Teşkilât-1 Mahsusa ve Cermen Esir Kamplarındaki Tatarlar," 69–76.
- 45. Jaeschke, "1916 Lozan Kongresi'nde Rusya Mahkumu Milletler," 18.
- 46. Ibid., 17-18.
- 47. Tosun, 1. Dünya Savaşında Kuzey Kafkasyalılar, 15.
- 48. The Union of Nationalities (Union des Nationalités) was founded in 1911 on the initiative of the French journalist Jean Pélissier, Lithuanian émigré Juozas Gabrys, and well-known Belgian bibliographer Paul Otlet. It aimed to study the problems and protect the rights of the peoples and countries without their own statehood or under foreign occupation and published the journal *Les Annales des Nationalités*. The first two Congresses of the Oppressed Nations were held in 1912 and 1915 in Paris. After the start of World War I the secret services and diplomacy of both belligerent blocs tried to use the union in their own interests, so its headquarters was moved to Lausanne at the end of 1915. It existed until 1919 (D. R. Watson, "Jean Pélissier and the 'Office Central des Nationalités' (1912–1919)"; Seixas X. M. Núñez *Entre Ginebra y Berlín*, 111ff.).
- 49. Núñez, Entre Ginebra y Berlín, 124.
- 50. Mehmed Şamil Bey was the son of a prominent Ottoman commander, Circassian Osman Ferid Paşa, and Imam Shamil's granddaughter Nefiset. Following Ferid Paşa's death in 1912, the family settled in Geneva (A. O. Erkan, *Turn My Head to the Caucasus*, 277).

Ahmed Saib Bey was born in Dagestan and emigrated to the Ottoman Empire while he was an officer in the Russian army. He became one of the leading figures of the constitutional movement and gained fame as a historian and writer of political essays. After 1908 he taught Russian language and literature at the Istanbul University (Berzeg, Kafkas Diasporasında Yazarlar ve Edebiyatçılar Sözlüğü, 15).

- 51. Turan, "'Kafkasya Komitesi' ve 'Türkiye'deki Kuzey Kafkasya Siyasi Göçmenleri Komitesi' Üzerine Bazı Kaynaklar," 15–16; Jaeschke, "1916 Lozan Kongresi'nde Rusya Mahkumu Milletler," 18–21.
- 52. Vahdet Keleşyılmaz, "Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa, Yusuf Akçura ve 1916 Lozan Milliyetler Konferansı," 461–62.
- 53. Turan, "Kafkasya Komitesi' ve 'Türkiye'deki Kuzey Kafkasya Siyasi Göçmenleri Komitesi' Üzerine Bazı Kaynaklar," 16; Kurat, *Türkiye ve Rusya*, 329. On Lenin's contacts in this period with Alexander Parvus, an international adventurer with a socialist background and the reputation of a successful trader, who in turn had close connections with the German Foreign Ministry's officials (including Wangenheim) and some eminent Young Turks, see D. N. Shub, *Politicheskie Deiateli Rossii (1850-kh-1920-kh gg.)*, chapter 6.
- Jaeschke, "1916 Lozan Kongresi'nde Rusya Mahkumu Milletler," 18; A. H. Hızal, Kuzey Kafkasya, 56.
- Çolak, Alman İmparatorluğu'nun Doğu Siyaseti Çerçevesinde Kafkasya Politikası, 141–42.
- 56. Erickson, Ordered to Die, 120.
- 57. Balcıoğlu, Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa'dan Cumhuriyet'e, 177.
- 58. On some causes and manifestations of "anti-Ottoman" sentiment among one part of Anatolian Circassians, see Michael A. Reynolds, "The Ottoman-Russian Struggle for Eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus (1908–1918)," 291–93.
- 59. See in detail Sarısaman, "Trabzon Mıntıkası Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa Heyet-i İdaresinin Faaliyetleri ve Gürcü Lejyonu," 518–23; Çolak, *Alman İmparatorluğu'nun Doğu Siyaseti Çerçevesinde Kafkasya Politikası*, 94–107.
- 60. Zürrer, "Almanya ve 1918 Yılında Kuzey Kafkasya'daki Gelişmeler," 71, 96.
- 61. [Tosun,] *t. Dünya Savaşında Kuzey Kafkasyalılar*, 17–18. It is noteworthy that the minutes of the mountaineers' congresses were instantly published by the CNCPET in Istanbul in French (see *Compte-rendu des Assemblées des Peuples de la Ciscaucasie et de leurs travaux legislatifs: Publié par le Comité de Bienfaisance des Emigrés Politiques de la Ciscaucasie en Turquie* [Constantinople: Imprimerie F. Loeffler, 1918]).
- 62. Kurat, Türkiye ve Rusya, 382-83.
- S.E. Berzeg, Kuzey Kafkasya Cumhuriyeti, 1:109–110; Balcıoğlu, Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa'dan Cumhuriyet'e, 178.
- 64. The signs of similar internal division can be observed in the North Caucasian movement in Turkey of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries (see, for example, Ö. A. Kurmel, "Adıge Yolu ve Dikkat Edilmesi Gerekenler," *Nart* 52 [2006], 27–28; M. Çelikpala, "From Immigrants to Diaspora: Influence of the North Caucasian Diaspora in Turkey," *Middle Eastern Studies* 3 [2006]: 439).
- 65. In 1893, while serving as a gendarmerie officer, Loh Zade Mehmed Emin Bey was exiled to Tripolitania for his connections with the Young Turk underground. In 1899 he fled to Cairo and founded the Society of Circassian Unity and its publication *İttihad Gazetesi* with the aim of facilitating "awakening and progress of the Circassian muhacirs and entire Ottoman nation." Both the society and the newspaper soon ceased to exist, while Mehmed Emin was pardoned by Abdülhamid II and appointed inspector of the immigrants' settlement in the Eskişehir province.

He never took a noticeable part in the activities of the Circassian cultural and political associations after that (*İttihad Gazetesi* 1 [October 15, 1899]; M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, *Bir Siyasal Örgüt Olarak Osmanlı İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti ve Jön Türklük (1889–1902*), 292–94, 333–34, 633).

- 66. BOA, HR.SYS 2876/3-3 (29.01.1918).
- 67. Yusuf Suad Bey got a theological and legal education. In 1911–14 he was the owner and later general editor of the *Guaze/Kafkas* newspaper. In 1912 he ran unsuccessfully for parliament with the Freedom and Accord Party in Bolu province (Berzeg, *Kafkas Diasporasında Yazarlar ve Edebiyatçılar Sözlüğü*, 197; *Guaze* 36 [May 3, 1912]).

Ahmed Lütfullah Bey was a graduate of the Higher School of Civilian Officials. Since 1911 he had been in the diplomatic service and actively wrote for the Guaze newspaper (Berzeg, Kafkas Diasporasında Yazarlar ve Edebiyatçılar Sözlüğü, 225).

Namık İsmail Bey was a well-known painter. In 1911–14 he underwent professional training in Paris. In 1914–17 he served in the acting army on the Caucasus front. During the armistice he taught art and French in the Circassian Exemplary School at Beşiktaş. In the republican period he became the director of the Turkish Academy of Fine Arts (Berzeg, Kafkas Diasporasında Yazarlar ve Edebiyatçılar Sözlüğü, 190–92). Berzeg, Kuzey Kafkasya Cumhuriyeti, 1:124; Balcıoğlu, Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa'dan Cumhuriyet'e, 178.

- 68. Berzeg, Kuzey Kafkasya Cumhuriyeti, 1:124, 144.
- Ibid., 124; Reynolds, "The Ottoman-Russian Struggle for Eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus," 540–41.
- 70. Berzeg, Kuzey Kafkasya Cumhuriyeti, 3:40, 165–67, 374–75. This activity was conducted entirely within the framework of the local ethno-national movement without any visible connection with the diasporic and Ottoman structures and therefore is out of the scope of this study. In 1924 Yusuf Suad was arrested by the Soviet authorities and exiled to Siberia (T. V. Polovinkina, Cherkesia—Bol' Moia, 187–94).
- 71. Hüseyin Rauf Bey was the son of Admiral Abaza Mehmed Muzaffer Paşa. He became famous for his successful actions as the captain of the *Hamidiye* cruiser during the Balkan Wars. In the early years of World War I he performed important tasks of the Special Organization in Iraq and Iran. He maintained close links with the Circassian political organizations (Berzeg, *Türkiye Kurtuluş Savaşı'nda Çerkes Göçmenleri*, 9).
- Enis Şahin, Trabzon ve Batum Konferansları ve Antlaşmaları (1917–1918), 310, 428–29.
- 73. Ibid., 386-91, 523-25; Kurat, *Türkiye ve Rusya*, 468-69, 482-85.
- 74. Kurat, Türkiye ve Rusya, 485.
- 75. İsmail Canbulad Bey was one of the founders of the Ottoman Society of Freedom in 1906 and an active participant in the 1908 Revolution. In subsequent years he held various administrative and diplomatic posts (Berzeg, *Türkiye Kurtuluş Savaşı'nda Çerkes Göçmenleri*, 44–45).

Hüseyin Kadri Bey (a cousin of Hüseyin Tosun) was considered to be one of the most moderate members of the CUP leadership. In 1912 he was elected to parliament from Karesi. Prior to the war he participated in the CSUMA's activities (Berzeg, *Soçi'nin Sürgündeki Sahipleri Çerkes-Vubıhlar*, 73).

Dr. Mehmed Reşid Bey was one of the founders of the Union and Progress Society in 1889. Until 1908 he was involved in the constitutional movement. He held administrative positions after the revolution, being at the same time an active member of the CSUMA (Berzeg, *Kuzey Kafkasya Cumhuriyeti*, 3:396–97).

Ahmed Hamdi Paşa had served at staff positions and in the Ottoman military missions abroad, including Russia, since 1881. He was among the founders of the CSUMA in 1908. After his retirement in 1914 he worked in all of the Circassian political societies and committees (Berzeg, *Türkiye Kurtuluş Savaşı'nda Çerkes Göçmenleri*, 17).

Ahmed Fevzi Paşa was the commander of the 9th Corps of the 3rd Army by the beginning of World War I. In November 1914 he was removed from this post for criticism of the command's tactical mistakes by Enver Paşa's hasty decision. In October 1916 he was appointed as the commander of the 2nd Caucasian Corps of the 3rd Army (Erickson, *Ordered to Die*, 53, 55, 136; Berzeg, *Türkiye Kurtuluş Savaşı'nda Çerkes Göçmenleri*, 58–59).

İsmail Hakkı Bey occupied staff positions at the Iraq front from the beginning of World War I until early 1918 (Berzeg, *Kuzey Kafkasya Cumhuriyeti*, 3:239–40). A. Turan, "Osmanlı Dönemi Kuzey Kafkasya Diasporası Tarihinden," 51.

- 76. M. Butbay, Kafkasya Hatıraları, 1-2.
- Turan, "Osmanlı Dönemi Kuzey Kafkasya Diasporası Tarihinden," 58; Hızal, Kuzey Kafkasya, 61, 64, 71.
- 78. Turan, "Osmanlı Dönemi Kuzey Kafkasya Diasporası Tarihinden," 52; Berzeg, Kuzey Kafkasya Cumhuriyeti, 3:377.
- 79. In its original constitutive documents this entity is styled "The Republic of the Union of the Mountaineers of the Caucasus."
- 80. [Tosun,] 1. Dünya Savaşında Kuzey Kafkasyalılar, 33–34.
- S. Yerasimos, Kurtuluş Savaşında Türk-Sovyet İlişkileri (1917–1923), 57–58; Şahin, Trabzon ve Batum Konferansları ve Antlaşmaları, 624–25.
- 82. M. Öztürk, "Atatürk Döneminde Türkiye'nin Kafkasya Politikası," 54.
- 83. Berzeg, Kuzey Kafkasya Cumhuriyeti, 1:201-2, 266, 283.
- 84. Şahin, *Trabzon ve Batum Konferansları ve Antlaşmaları*, 622–27, 639–40; H. Bal, "Kuzey Kafkasya'nın İstiklali ve Türkiye'nin Askeri Yardımı (1917–1918)," 47–49. A similar agreement was signed by the Porte with the Azerbaijani Republic.
- Zürrer, "Almanya ve 1918 Yılında Kuzey Kafkasya'daki Gelişmeler," 71, 79; Çolak, Alman İmparatorluğu'nun Doğu Siyaseti Çerçevesinde Kafkasya Politikası, 219ff.
- 86. Berzeg, Kuzey Kafkasya Cumhuriyeti, 1:248–49, 251.
- 87. Bal, "Kuzey Kafkasya'nın İstiklali ve Türkiye'nin Askeri Yardımı," 47, 54.
- 88. Ibid., 50–53; A. Saydam, *Kafkasya'da Bağımsızlık Mücadeleleri ve Türkiye*, 94.
- 89. Interestingly, Enver Paşa had originally considered for this role the prominent military commander Gen. Kazım Karabekir and then (after Karabekir's refusal) the Ottoman prince Ömer Faruk, who undoubtedly had Circassian roots on the maternal side. Nuri Paşa was eventually appointed at the request of the Azerbaijani nationalists at Istanbul (Reynolds, "The Ottoman-Russian Struggle for Eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus," 442–45).

- 90. Detailed accounts of the actions of the Ottoman troops in Dagestan and adjacent parts of the Caucasus in 1918 are contained in the memoirs of the campaign's participants. See İ. H. Berkuk, "Büyük Harpte (334) Şimali Kafkasyadaki Faaliyetlerimiz ve 15. Firkanın Harekatı ve Muharebeleri," *Askeri Mecmua* 94 (1934): 3–103; Mehmed Tevfik, "Şimali Kafkas Muharebeleri," *Askeri Mecmua* 64 (1927): 130–71; Süleyman İzzet, "Büyük Harpte (1334/1918) 15. Piyade Tümeninin Azerbaycan ve Şimali Kafkasyadaki Hareket ve Muharebeleri," *Askeri Mecmua* 103 (1936): 5–256.
- 91. Yusuf İzzet Paşa was often referred to in official correspondence as "the Commander of the North Caucasus" (Şimali Kafkas Kumandanı). He apparently was endowed by the Porte with broad powers to make operational decisions in the region. In September 1918, in response to the Germans' proposal about dispatch of their two battalions from Georgia to Vladikavkaz and Grozny, Yusuf İzzet Paşa in decisive form signaled that he would tolerate any German presence in the North Caucasus only if Germany recognized the NCR and put those units at Yusuf İzzet's full disposal (*Birinci Dünya Harbinde Türk Harbi*, 596).
- 92. V. Güsar, "Kuzey Kafkas Son Milli Mücadelesine Katılan Türkiye Çerkesleri," 5–7; idem, "Şimali Kafkasya İstiklali ve Türk Ordusu," 2; Berzeg, *Kuzey Kafkasya Cumhuriyeti*, 1:266, 268, 272, 290; 3:202–3, 239, 418–19, 429–30.
- 93. Birinci Dünya Harbinde Türk Harbi, 596.
- 94. Berzeg, Kuzey Kafkasya Cumhuriyeti, 1:304.
- 95. Bal, "Kuzey Kafkasya'nın İstiklali ve Türkiye'nin Askeri Yardımı," 86; Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, *Makedonya'dan Orta Asya'ya Enver Paşa*, 3:387–88.
- 96. Cemal Sami Bey both before and after the start of the war attended the Circassian organizations. In early 1918 the SUC was planning to send him to the Caucasus through the Special Organization (Sh. D. Inal-ipa, Zarubezhnye abkhazy, 19; Berzeg, Kuzey Kafkasya Cumhuriyeti, 1:124).
- 97. S.Z. Lakoba, Ocherki Politicheskoi Istorii Abkhazii, 62-63.
- 98. Zürrer, "Almanya ve 1918 Yılında Kuzey Kafkasya'daki Gelişmeler," 81–82, 104–5; Berzeg, *Kuzey Kafkasya Cumhuriyeti*, 1:233–44, 283–87, 305.
- 99. By circumstance it fell upon Hüseyin Rauf Bey, who had been appointed navy minister in the new Ottoman government, to sign this act on behalf of the Porte. It is noteworthy that during his negotiations with the Entente delegate, Admiral Arthur Calthorp, Hüseyin Rauf on his own initiative tried to convince him of the reasonability of creating an independent confederated state under British protection in the Caucasus (D. Avc10ğlu, Milli Kurtuluş Tarihi (1838'den 1995'e), 230–31).
- 100. Bayur, Türk İnkılabı Tarihi, 3:712-13.
- 101. Berkuk, "Büyük Harpte (334) Şimali Kafkasyadaki Faaliyetlerimiz ve 15. Fırkanın Harekatı ve Muharebeleri," 95–96; Süleyman İzzet, "Büyük Harpte (1334/1918) 15. Piyade Tümeninin Azerbaycan ve Şimali Kafkasyadaki Hareket ve Muharebeleri," 239–42.
- 102. M. Öztürk, *"Atatürk Döneminde Türkiye'nin Kafkasya Politikası*," 67; İzzet. "Büyük Harpte (1334/1918) 15. Piyade Tümeninin Azerbaycan," 243–52.
- 103. Aydemir, Makedonya'dan Orta Asya'ya Enver Paşa, 464.
- 104. Some of these publications are A. Méker *Les Russes en Circassie* (Berne: n.p., 1919); H. Bammate, *The Caucasus Problem* (Berne: n.p., 1919); idem, *Le problème*

- du Caucase (Lausanne: n.p., 1919); [A. Meker and H. Bammate,] Circassia and Daghestan (Lausanne: n.p., n.d.); and probably Carte ethnographique et politique de la République de l'Union des Peuples Circassiens et du Daghestan (Berne: n.p., n.d.).
- 105. Great Britain, National Archives (formerly Public Record Office), Cabinet Papers, London (hereafter PRO/CAB) 608/84/25 (Proposed Resettlement of Circassians in the Caucasus, April 1919). The memorandum does not contain any signatures, though it bears a seal with the names of two known organizations: the CNCPET in French (Comité des Emigrés Politiques de la Ciscaucasie en Turquie) and the SNC in Turkish (Şimalî Kafkasya Cemiyet-i Hayriyesi), which once more confirms the actual unity of the Circassian political associations of the time.
- 106. Ibid. (text of the petition, November 24, 1918).
- 107. Ibid. (A. Toynbee's report, April 3, 1919). Within the walls of the Foreign Office some much more skeptical evaluations of North Caucasian statehood were circulating in this period. Thus a secret memorandum prepared in October 1918 by the Political Intelligence Department stated that "the tribes [of the North Caucasus] are so wild and split up (linguistically and geographically) that it is improbable that they have established any effective central administration." It also pointed to the limitedness of the real basis of the mountaineers independence movement to the territory of Dagestan at best by that time and expressed strong belief in its controllability by the CUP leadership, hence drawing conclusion about the unreasonability of its support by Britain (PRO/CAB 24/68/45 [Memorandum on the Republics of "North Caucasus" and "Azerbaijan" and Enver Pasha's Policy There, October 1918]).
- 108. Great Britain, National Archives (formerly Public Record Office), Foreign Office Papers, London (PRO/FO), 608/84/25.
- 109. Berzeg, Kuzey Kafkasya Cumhuriyeti, 2: 22, 124-25.
- 110. Butbay, Kafkasya Hatıraları, 2-3.
- 111. Avcıoğlu, Milli Kurtuluş Tarihi, 230-32.
- 112. Atatürk'ün Tamim, Telgraf ve Beyannameleri, 192–96; S. Selek, Anadolu İhtilali, 319–22.
- 113. See Mustafa Kemal Paşa's instruction to Kazım Karabekir dated December 1, 1920 (Atatürk'ün Milli Dış Politikası, 205).
- 114. Mustafa Şahin Bey was a lecturer at Galatasaray Lyceum and director of the Circassian Exemplary School at Beşiktaş. He developed the Abkhazian Latinscript alphabet that was published by the SNC in 1919 (Berzeg, *Kuzey Kafkasya Cumhuriyeti*, 3:251).
- 115. Kazım Karabekir, İstiklal Harbimiz, 776; Butbay, Kafkasya Hatıraları, 1, 7–8.
- 116. Saydam, Kafkasya'da Bağımsızlık Mücadeleleri ve Türkiye, 100–101.
- 117. Ibid., 100–102; Murad, "The Jihad of Said Shamil and Sultan Murad for the Liberation of the Caucasus," 184–87; Hızal, *Kuzey Kafkasya*, 81. In the 1920s to 1950s Mehmed Said (Said Şamil) was one of the leaders of the Caucasian émigré movement in Europe (Berzeg, *Kuzey Kafkasya Cumhuriyeti*, 3:399–400).
- 118. Butbay, *Kafkasya Hatıraları*, 83–87; Yerasimos, *Kurtuluş Savaşında Türk-Sovyet İlişkileri*, 162, 168.
- 119. As to Mustafa Şahin Bey, before returning to Turkey he made a trip to Abkhazia, where he discussed with the local public the repatriation prospects of Abkhazians

- from Anatolia (Butbay, *Kafkasya Hatıraları*, 104–21; Inal-ipa, *Zarubezhnye Abkhazy*, 8–11).
- 120. The text of the report is given in Karabekir, İstiklal Harbimiz, 775–79.
- 121. Ali Fuat Cebesoy, *Moskova Hatıraları*, 70–72, 83–86; Avcıoğlu, *Milli Kurtuluş Tarihi*, 233–34.
- 122. Interestingly enough, the treaty initialed by Bekir Sami Bey was sharply criticized at a closed meeting of the Grand National Assembly on October 17, 1920, by another prominent member of the Circassian nationalist elite: Gen. Yusuf İzzet Paşa (deputy from Bolu and head of the parliament's military commission). He accused the Turkish delegation of lack of insistence in defending the independence of Azerbaijan and the North Caucasus and actually put into question the whole policy of rapprochement and friendship with Russia, "which had massacred Circassians, Dagestanis, and other Muslims," *TBMM Gizli Celse Zabıtları* (Ankara: İş Bankası Yayınları Kültür Dizisi, 1985), 1:184–85.
- 123. Yerasimos, Kurtuluş Savaşında Türk-Sovyet İlişkileri, 162, 176.
- 124. A. Avagyan, "Türk-Bolşevik İlişkilerinde Kuzey Kafkasya ve Kafkas Muhacirleri Sorunları," 31–33. Upon his return to Ankara in early February 1921, Bekir Sami drew the attention of Efrem Eshba, the head of the Soviet special mission to Anatolia and an ethnic Abkhazian, to the "mythical nature" of the autonomy of the Soviet non-Russian republics, focusing his criticism mainly on the Bolshevik policies in the North Caucasus and Azerbaijan (a copy of the transcript of the conversation between Bekir Sami and Eshba, preserved in the Russian State Archives of Sociopolitical History, was kindly provided to us by Dr. Vladimir Novikov).
- 125. İ. Öztoprak, "Dışişleri Bakanı Bekir Sami Bey'in İstifası Meselesi," 2774–75.
- Documents on British Foreign Policy (1919–1939), ed. E. L. Woodward and R. Butler, 271–74.
- 127. Öztoprak, "Dışişleri Bakanı Bekir Sami Bey'in İstifası Meselesi," 2781; B. Yavuz, "Bekir Sami Bey'in Haziran 1921 Avrupa Seyahatine İlişkin Fransız ve İngiliz Belgeleri," 1323–27.
- 128. Mehmed Fuad Bey during World War I worked in the Special Organization and occupied various administrative positions. In 1920 he was elected to the Great National Assembly. In the Republican period he had a successful diplomatic career (Berzeg, *Türkiye Kurtuluş Savaşı'nda Çerkes Göçmenleri*, 33–34).
- 129. Col. Bekir Sami Bey (not to be confused with Bekir Sami Kunduk, bureaucrat and politician) in the initial period of the war served on the Caucasian front under the command of Yusuf İzzet Paşa. Later he distinguished himself in combat operations in Iraq. In 1919 he was among the first organizers of the armed resistance to the Greek aggression in western Anatolia as the acting commander of the 17th Corps (Ünal, Kurtuluş Savaşında Çerkeslerin Rolü, 32–33).
- Ibid., 33, 129-31; Berzeg, Türkiye Kurtuluş Savaşı'nda Çerkes Göçmenleri, 20, 31, 33-34, 82; A. Özçelik, Ali Fuad Cebesoy (1882-10 Ocak 1968), 183-85.
- 131. [Riza Nur,] Dr. Riza Nur'un Moskova-Sakarya Hatiralari, 254–61, 267, 273–74.
- 132. Tunaya, Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler, 3:390.
- 133. Shortly after their arrival in the region, the Ottoman Circassian servicemen had to observe this discrepancy between their notions of the Caucasus and the discovered reality. For instance, İsmail Hakkı Bey was rather depressed by the lack of popular

support for the Mountaineers Government and the cooperation of different groups of the local population with the Bolsheviks, Bicherakhov's Cossacks, and other "non-national" forces. On September 24, 1918, he addressed a secret message to his subordinate officers. It stated the existing situation and also contained an attempt to explain it: "Dagestan turned out not as we supposed, which is quite natural. It is impossible to expect anything other from this wretched people, exhausted by all kinds of oppression, rivalries, and disputes"; "among a large people there must necessarily exist several traitors"; and so forth (Bal, "Kuzey Kafkasya'nın İstiklali ve Türkiye'nin Askeri Yardımı," 61). See also Berkuk, "Büyük Harpte (334) Şimali Kafkasyadaki Faaliyetlerimiz ve 15. Fırkanın Harekatı ve Muharebeleri," 17ff., 34, 50.

The Armenian Question or the Eastern Question?

Sevtap Demirci

The Ottoman Empire, which lasted for six centuries, grew from one of a number of Turcoman principalities that ringed the Byzantine state in western Anatolia from 1299. Within two centuries the Ottomans had established an empire that spanned three continents (Asia, Africa, and Europe) and controlled vast resources, lands, and armies. Until the end of the seventeenth century this multiethnic empire was one of the most influential powers in world politics, involved in wars, conquest, and diplomacy. From that century on, however, having reached the effective limits of its expansion, it began to lose a large part of the power that it once had. The conquests stopped, the Ottomans fell behind technologically and tactically superior European armies, and war (once an important source of income for the empire) became a counterproductive endeavor. This military weakness was accompanied by permanent fiscal crises. On the decline since the Treaty of Karlowitzof in 1699, the Ottoman Empire was preserved through the existing balance among the Great Powers of Europe. The empire labeled "the sick man of Europe" since 1844 had entered a long process of dissolution.

From the mid-nineteenth century until the beginning of World War I the Ottoman Empire faced multiple crises, most of which resulted in the loss of territory and subjects. The Eastern Question, a phrase used to indicate the problems created by the decline and gradual dissolution of the empire (from a British perspective), lingered for a century and a half, subsequently becoming the most lasting and intractable of all diplomatic questions. The more the economic and strategic interests of the Great Powers in the empire grew and ensuing rivalries became visible, the more firmly the Eastern Question became established as a priority on the agenda of international relations.

The Ottomans' efforts to end this deterioration through a vigorous program of westernization proved fruitless. Instead of enabling the empire to throw off its weakness, this approach led down to its downfall.¹ Among the many reasons for this are the nationalistic aspirations of non-Muslim and later also Muslim subjects of the empire, instigated by the Great Powers. In order to produce a quick and permanent solution to the Eastern Question, the Great Powers manipulated the Armenians, whose great devotion to the interest of the empire gained them the name millet-i sadıka (the loyal people). With the demise of the Ottoman Empire, the Great Powers lost no time in seizing the opportunity to use the Armenians as a major instrument of policy by intervening in the internal affairs of the "sick man" in order to further their interests in Ottoman territory. So the Armenians in Anatolia—like the Christian subjects of the empire in the Balkans—were brought to the forefront of the diplomatic forums in the international political system. This chapter is an attempt to show that the Armenian Question and the Eastern Question are interconnected: the first of these questions was employed to settle the second.

EVENTS LEADING TO WORLD WAR I

Although the Turks and the Armenians are typically conceived as being the two sides of the Armenian Question, neither of them originally raised the issue. Furthermore, the conflict was between Muslims and Armenians, especially between Kurdish Muslims and Armenians. Therefore it is incorrect to identify the Turks and the Armenians as the ones who caused the problem. This is a distortion of historical facts and disregards the determinative role of the Great Powers in the emergence of the Armenian issue.

Until the nineteenth century the Armenian Question was not an issue. The Ottoman Empire was a good example of successful maintenance of religious and ethnic tolerance for the various millets living within its frontiers. The Muslim and non-Muslim subjects of the sultan lived in security and peace for the first five centuries of the empire's existence, each group preserving its own traditions, religions, and cultures with little interference from the central government. The sultans intervened only to restore order and prevent disputes from upsetting the long-standing stability and peace in Ottoman society. Non-Muslim communities also enjoyed extensive privileges under the millet system. Each community was responsible to its own religious leaders, who acted as intermediaries between the community and the state.

The Armenian millet was no exception. It is no coincidence that an Ottoman sultan first recognized the Armenian Gregorian Church in 1461 as a separate Christian belief. By virtue of this legal recognition the community came to enjoy the right of virtually autonomous existence, with its own elected leaders, the authority to utilize its own language in speech, religious sermons, and print, the ability to work in almost all professions in any part of the vast state (as bankers, cabinet ministers and ambassadors, among other professions), and the freedom to develop its own identity.²

Starting in the nineteenth century, however, this stability was disrupted by the penetration of capitalism, the semicolonization of the Ottoman economy, and the weakness of the state. These developments proved destructive when coupled with the encouragement of the major powers to divide the Ottoman state by way of riding the wave of nationalism among the subjects of the sultan: first his non-Muslim subjects (the Greeks) and then the Muslim subjects as well (the Albanians and Arabs). These millets, which formed the complex mosaic of Ottoman society, were not immune to various levels of external influence.³ As the Ottoman Empire declined, the Great Powers began "to adopt the millets as clients, exploiting them to further their own interests" in the empire. In other words, the non-Muslim subjects provided the Great Powers with the pretext to intervene in the internal affairs of the empire, already in decline, and to further their strategic, political, economic, and imperial interests. Thus the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca of 1774, which signified the beginning of the Eastern Question, became the pretext for Russia to establish a protectorate over the Greek millet. France claimed a similar right to protect the Catholic subjects of the sultan. By the end of the nineteenth century "all the non-Muslim millets, save the Jews, had found a de facto protector."4

In fact the efforts of the Great Powers to secure economic, financial, and political dominance in the vast Ottoman territory go far beyond the century under consideration. Beginning in the second half of the sixteenth century France then Russia and later Britain and the United States made attempts to protect the Christian minorities (Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant) under the pretext of defending minority communities in the empire through a system of foreign schools and missionary organizations. Despite these contradictory developments, no Armenian Question existed: the Armenian subjects had no disagreements with the Ottoman state. On the contrary, the Armenian community was fully integrated into the Ottoman society and coexisted peacefully.

The turning point in this peaceful coexistence was the Turco-Russian War of 1877–78. The war, which resulted in the defeat of the Ottoman armies, would constitute a milestone in the creation of the question. Russia presented an ultimatum to the Ottomans, claiming to be the "protector of all Christian minorities in the Empire" (Greeks and Serbs in the Balkans and Armenians in the east). In response Manok Efendi, the Armenian deputy for Aleppo in the Ottoman parliament, repudiated the offer "on behalf of the Armenian millet" in a striking manner. He said that he was honored to be the representative of the millet-i sadıka in the Ottoman parliament and that the Armenians were quite "content with the life they were leading in the empire and were ready to defend the country along with their Muslim brothers." Russia believed that by dividing Anatolian territory it would be able to achieve its goal to dominate the Mediterranean and the Middle East and to reach warm waters.

On March 3, 1878, the empire, after having been defeated by the Russians, was forced to sign the Treaty of San Stefano, by which the eastern part of Anatolia came under Russian control. The British were alarmed, because the Russians would have the control of the "whole Asia Minor." "The greatest blow ever struck at the British Empire," wrote Henry Layard (British ambassador to Istanbul), commenting on the action of Britain's great rival in the East and in India, which was Britain's most precious possession. Russian control not only posed a threat to the Straits and Britain's trade and finance but also threatened British use of the Persian Gulf by way of the valleys of the Euphrates and Tigris. Therefore Britain bolstered up the Ottoman Empire in return for Cyprus, revised the Treaty of San Stefano, and secured the route to India. The Austrians were equally outraged with "Russia's flagrant violation of the spirit of bilateral agreements made outside the Concert." Russia's claim "to settle single-handed a question which the Treaty of Paris had formally declared to be the concern of the Concert of Europe" could not be accepted.8

The Congress of Berlin was thereupon convened, leading to a treaty that in European terms was certainly an improvement on San Stefano. To quote F.R. Bridge and Robert Bullen, "Russia's exorbitant pretensions were checked; and Britain and Austria-Hungary strengthened their position as counterbalancing powers in the Near East, posing as the patrons of not only Turkey but also of the non-Bulgarian Balkan states. The principle that the Eastern Question was a matter for the Concert of Europe had been triumphantly vindicated." This is where the Armenians were brought in: article 16 of the Treaty of San Stefano, which promised reforms for the Armenians in the eastern parts of the empire,

was reapproved as article 61 in the Treaty of Berlin, signed on July 13, 1878: "The Sublime Port undertakes to carry out, without further delay, the ameliorations and reforms demanded by local requirements in the provinces inhabited by the Armenians, and to guarantee their security against the Circassians and Kurds. It will periodically make known the steps taken to this effect to the Powers, who will superintend their application." ¹⁰

According to article 61 of the Treaty of Berlin the Armenian Question was internationalized. The way was now open to the process of Great Power protection of minorities and intervention in Ottoman affairs. The Great Powers secured the right to intervene in the internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire through demands for reforms to be carried out by the empire in the eastern vilayets, where Armenians were present. Nurias Ceras, who was sent to Berlin along with the former Armenian patriarch Mgerdich Hrimciyan, made the following comment: "The Berlin Congress not only contained Article 61 instead of Article 16 but also laid the foundations of the Armenian state that was to be founded in the future. In fact Europe did not give us autonomy, but it granted us an article that would lead us to the aim that we yearn to reach...with the Berlin Congress we obtained a gold mine. It is our business to work on it and extract the gold." Thus the Treaty of Berlin included "a right for the Armenians, an obligation for the Ottoman Empire, and a responsibility for Europe."12

The Bulgarians who revolted against the central authority in 1876 and gained a great degree of autonomy with the Berlin Treaty set an invaluable example for the Armenians. What was achieved in the West (the Balkans) also could easily be done in the East (Anatolia). The expectations of receiving the support of European governments and public opinion ran high. The delegation of Armenian representatives presented a memorandum called the "Administrative Project for Turkish Armenia." After having stated their demands, they wrote:

The Eastern Question has now entered a phase when a definite and immediate solution is absolutely imperative. The Question is one aspect of the weakening of Ottoman despotism in a country inhabited by a mixed population of Muslims and Christians; and it is precisely this heterogeneity of population that is the most vexatious aspect of the problem, the one that constitutes the greatest and most imminent danger, that demands immediate solution.¹³

For the Great Powers, however, whose real motive was to break up and divide the empire, the time was not yet ripe. The partition might result in strained relations among them, because the empire still gave the British some "security against a Russian advance towards the East Mediterranean and overland route to India; for Austria-Hungary, it prevented the establishment in the Balkans of national states with territorial claims against the Dual Monarchy and potential allies of Russia; and Russia saw in the Empire, as guardian of the closure of the Straits to foreign warships, an obstacle to a British incursion into the Black Sea." ¹⁴ Therefore at Berlin the aim of the British diplomats was to check the Russian influence in the Middle East by supporting the independence and integrity of the Ottoman Empire. This was considered a safer course for Britain to follow than trying to agree with other powers on a division of the empire, which "might land her in unforeseen and unpredictable difficulties." ¹⁵

Nonimplementation of the reforms by the Porte until the 1880s was due to fear of further dismemberment. In the eyes of the Porte having the Great Powers establish a gendarmerie force, courts, and tax-collection institutions might eventually lead to an autonomous Armenian state. Indeed this did stir revolutionary activity among Armenians.

The Hunchakian Revolutionary Party was formed in Geneva in 1887 by seven Russian Armenian students with the objective of securing the political independence of Armenia. The Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnaktsutyun, a merger of various Armenian groups, primarily in Russia) was founded in Tbilisi in 1890 with the purpose of political and economic freedom of Armenia within the framework of the Ottoman Empire. The technique employed by these national groups was to stimulate strife between Muslims and Armenians, to incite rebellion, and thus to force the European states to intervene. Not only the Europeans but also the Americans were politically involved in the matter. Reports sent by the missionaries and consuls on the incompetence of and mistreatment by the Ottoman authorities evoked a massive reaction among the public, who felt for fellow Christians. The letter written by the Earl of Rosebery, British secretary of state for foreign affairs, to Sir J. Pauncefote, British ambassador to Washington, shows how concerned the Americans were:

The government of the United States, having had under their serious consideration the treatment experienced by the Christian inhabitants of Turkey, were of opinion that it behoved [sic] Chris-

tian nations, more especially Great Britain and the United States, to act cordially together in dealing with the Ottoman Government. Mr. White was therefore instructed to inform me of their earnest desire to act concurrently and harmoniously with her Majesty's government in protecting and vindicating the rights of the subjects or citizens of either nation in Turkey, subject to the reservation by the United States of complete liberty and independence of action when found advisable.¹⁶

The British prime minister, David Lloyd George, personally ordered the Propaganda Bureau to deal with the Turks: "My dear [John] Buchan," he wrote, "when you take in hand the question of Allied and Neutral propaganda, I am anxious you should pay attention to the futility or iniquity of the Turk." In this project special attention was paid to the Armenian issue, through surreptitious propaganda: "I need hardly point out that it is very important that all this should be done gradually and the articles should be spread over a considerable period of time, so as not to make it too obvious what we are driving at." ¹⁷

The existence of a large but fragile state tempted the stronger powers to stake a claim for spheres of influence and economic control, while the Ottoman Empire was the object not only of encroachment by the European Great Powers but also of the aspirations of national independence among its non-Turkish subjects.¹⁸ The activities of Catholic and later Protestant missionaries had already contributed a great deal to the awakening of Armenian national consciousness. It would not be wrong to say that "although a small number of British, American and Russian diplomats and missionaries served in eastern Anatolia, their influence on international political decisions related to the region and on the local population was so significant that they must be considered actual actors in the eastern Anatolian stage, albeit on an international level." Especially after the Turco-Russian War of 1877-78 the missionaries assumed an increasingly political role among the Christian inhabitants as spokespersons for Christian rights and staunch critics of Ottoman governance. In some cases they even encouraged violence by portraying Muslims as "religionless" and "pitiless." 20 So began the demonstrations and terrorist acts of the revolutionary groups against the central authority with the hope that this might result in the intervention of the Great Powers.²¹ The British consul in Erzurum reported in 1895: "The aims of the (Armenian) revolutionary committees are to stir up general discontent and to get the

Turkish government and the people to react with violence, thus attracting the attention of foreign powers to the imagined sufferings of the Armenian people, and getting them to act to correct the situation."²²

No help, however, was likely to be forthcoming from the powers for two reasons. First, the period of the precarious "concert" of the Europe of 1878 had long passed and the Great Powers could not agree on a specific policy. Second, Sultan Abdülhamid II was a master tactician playing off one power against the other. Moreover, the archival documents prove that the sultan had firsthand information about what was going on in the eastern vilayets and was determined not to give way to the "rebels." In a letter dated January 16, 1894, to the Prince of Radolen, the German ambassador in Istanbul, to be conveyed to Kaiser Wilhelm, Sultan Abdülhamid wrote:

Armenian instigators have been encouraging the Armenians of Sus [south of Van Lake] not to pay their taxes and to resort to violence toward government officers and Muslims. The Armenians are clearly in a state of rebellion. They have been acting with extreme cruelty, having dismembered a number of defenseless Turks and tortured others with burning gunpowder.... A few Armenians disguising themselves as Turks have been apprehended. They were instigators who were murdering Armenians and in that way sought to stir Armenians up against the Turks. The names of a number of Turks who allegedly murdered Armenians were given to the British ambassador, but I was able to prove to the contrary that it was the Turks whose names were given who had been murdered by Armenians. The obvious object of the Armenians is to incite the Turks and, when the forces come to suppress them, assert that they are being treated cruelly and draw upon themselves the mercy of Europe—and particularly of England.... There is quite a widespread belief in the Armenian region that in the near future the "red coats"—that is, the British army—will be coming to deliver their country. Thanks to a repeat of the legend of "Bulgarian atrocities" the Armenians seek to gain a sort of autonomy like the Balkans have. Yet the Armenians are not congregated; nor do they constitute a majority anywhere and for that reason they cannot justifiably ask for autonomy.... I swear to you that I will not under any circumstances bow to these unjust and oppressive Armenian demands and I would rather die than agree to any reform that would lead to autonomy.²³

The Great Powers not only had political interests in the empire but also had economic considerations that they were determined to retain. The economic subservience had started in the mid-nineteenth century. The Ottoman Empire was forced through bankruptcy and financial chaos to assign six sources of revenue to the service of the national debt and to hand over their collection to the Public Debt Administration, managed by European representatives. Having permanently suffered from deficits, the empire was regarded as an almost bankrupt state just before the war. The economic and financial domination of the Great Powers was reflected in every sphere of public life. The banks, mines, oil deposits, waterworks, power plants, harbors, sea transport, and municipal enterprises were run by and for European capital, while external trade was monopolized by foreigners or by Greek, Armenian, and Jewish agents. This state of affairs made the empire's economy "an easy prey for domination and even exploitation by the Great Powers." 24

This was the gloomy picture at the turn of the twentieth century. Hopes were placed in the Young Turk Revolution of 1908, which was believed to offer a permanent solution to the already aggravated situation. The Committee of Union and Progress made a determined effort to resolve the Armenian Question through reform, recognizing that "what remained of the Empire could only be maintained by a policy of stringent reform and decentralisation." The CUP wanted to "bring together all religious and ethnic communities in a union and win over all malcontents with their reform program which would fulfil the promise of liberty, justice, and equality." ²⁵

Thus the relations between the Unionists and the Dashnaks were cordial; even the komitadjis were pardoned and allowed to come to Anatolia via Kars and Erzurum. ²⁶ Some were deputies in the Ottoman parliament, including Karekin Pastermajian (Armen Garo or Karo), who had participated in the Ottoman Bank raid; and Vartkes Serengulian, a ringleader in the Van rebellion. The most important posts in state machinery, such as the Foreign Ministry and the Post and Telegram Ministry were allocated to Armenian subjects of the empire, Gabriel Noradunkan and Oskan Efendi. ²⁷ This went on until 1909, when the counter-revolution in Istanbul (the March 31 Incident) and Adana incidents poisoned the mutual understanding. Nevertheless, both sides managed to continue cooperation and signed an agreement in September 1909 to work together on behalf of progress, the constitution, and unity. Although the Unionists and the Dashnaks agreed on a common platform for the parliamentary elections held in 1912, their relations had become strained by early 1913 due

to the increasing tendency of the Armenians to look to Russia as their only effective protector. It should also be remembered that the formation and activities of the Kurdish Hamidiye regiments in 1891 had given the Kurdish tribes "an institutional and official capacity in terms of imposing new taxes on Armenians," who were already burdened with taxation by the central government. Moreover, the Ottoman policy of settling those lands with Kurds and other immigrants from the Caucasus in order to keep a military presence on the border with Russia "did nothing but to alienate the Armenians in the eastern provinces." 28 Yet a new law on provincial administration was promulgated on March 26, 1913, which "increased local autonomy in administrative and financial matters, increased and defined the powers of the governor, and allowed for general provincial councils to be elected by voters of the second degree, namely by local notables and landlords." Reforms related to the administration of eastern vilayets of the empire, to quote the British ambassador, were "on decentralising lines."29

The Hunchak Congress held in Constanza (Romania) in September 1913, however, led to a decision "to move from legal to illegal activity, which included a plot to assassinate Talat, the minister of the Interior." The Unionists engaged in a bitter struggle to keep the empire intact with regard to foreign policy developments and also had to take into consideration the internal difficulties. After the initial enthusiasm for the constitutional regime, the relations between the Porte and the Armenian subjects once again became tense, with the growing sense of nationalism as well as the resurrection of the Armenian Question by Russia. The attitude of the CUP leadership gradually changed not only because of the Hunchaks' policy but also because "the Dashnak leaders, the heads of the Armenian church, the Armenians in the diaspora, seeking to take advantage of the militarily defeated Turkey, renewed their efforts to bring about a solution to the Armenian Question through the intervention of the Great Powers. This appeal for outside help was considered to be 'proof of unpatriotic and provocative attitude' by the Armenians."30

By reviving the Armenian Question Russia not only would "regain the loyalty of its Armenian subjects, but also would strike a blow against possible anarchy in Transcaucasia. In order to protect the sphere of influence in the northern Persian provinces and to plan for future expansion, Russia needed a loyal Transcaucasia." "Transcaucasia with its varied and not over-peaceful population," Russian foreign minister Sergei Dmitrievich Sazonov recalled in his memoirs, "was dangerous ground for any kind of disturbance, and the local administration feared nothing more than to see the Turkish border provinces become the theatre for an armed

rebellion."³² After prolonged negotiations the Ottoman government agreed to sign the Russian reform proposal regarding the Armenians on February 8, 1914. By April 1914 two foreign inspectors-general (Dutch and Norwegian) were selected to supervise the reform process in the eastern provinces. It would be naïve to think that the Unionists (having had the experience of Macedonian reforms and its consequences) were unaware that this move would lead to a Russian protectorate in the eastern part of Anatolia, with the ultimate result of an independent Armenia. The Unionists deeply resented the intervention of the Great Powers on behalf of the Armenians and dismissed the two inspectors soon after the general mobilization after Germany's declaration of war on Russia.

Thus the Young Turks' program of "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity," intended to regenerate the empire, failed to produce the desired effect internally as well as externally. Soon after the establishment of the constitutional regime Bulgaria declared its independence on September 5, 1908. The next day Austria announced the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina provinces that it had occupied in 1878. On that same day Crete announced its decision to unite with Greece. The Sublime Porte could do little but protest to the Great Powers who had signed the Treaty of Berlin in 1878. The first two acts were a violation of that treaty, while the status of Crete was also guaranteed by the powers. The troubles were far from over. By 1911 the empire had become engaged in a war with Italy in Tripoli and, while occupied in that front, was attacked by the Balkan states in 1912. The Balkan Wars of 1912–13 proved to be a disaster for the empire, which lost virtually all of its European possessions. Its very existence began to be questioned, because Anatolia and the Arab lands were also under great threat. No matter how hard the CUP leaders tried to keep the empire intact, they could stop neither its dismemberment nor its decay.

WORLD WAR I AND ITS AFTERMATH

On the eve of World War I the European political system was still dominated by a few major powers, who regarded themselves as "the established arbiters of major international questions." It was the imperial rivalries of these powers, however, that inevitably led to the outbreak of World War I, marking the end of the European states system. Some regretted the war, but

for many people war was not considered as a wholly undesirable experience: some saw it as a solution to social and political problems, a necessary surgery to market the body politic whole; others saw it as an opportunity to escape from the routine and tedium of their ordinary lives, a great adventure or sporting challenge. A few saw it as an opportunity for revolution as, to use Lenin's phrase, a "great accelerator," and for small nations a possibility—striving for independence and unity.³⁴

The Great Powers were of the opinion that World War I would bring the solution to the Eastern Question and therefore also the Armenian Question. When the Ottoman Empire entered the war on the side of the Central Powers, both questions took a dramatic turn. On August 2, the day after the German declaration of war on Russia, the Ottomans signed a hastily negotiated secret treaty of alliance with Germany in return for a guarantee of their territorial integrity against Russia. In November they came into the war on Germany's side.

Britain ardently protected the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire throughout the greater part of the nineteenth century because it strongly resented the Russian presence in eastern Anatolia. By the end of that century, however, Britain had abandoned this policy and agreed to the territorial demands of its allies: France, Italy, and Russia. The idea of keeping the empire as a buffer between Russia and the Persian Gulf, where its national interests lay, was not a safe and sustainable policy anymore. The empire had reached a point where the partitioning was inevitable. Hence Britain reversed its policy and tried to dismember the Ottoman Empire. In that regard the events in 1915 were the result of the new British policy efforts.

The British were quick to show their disapproval of the Ottoman act of siding with the Central Powers at the highest level. British prime minister Herbert Asquith stated in his annual speech at Guildhall that the "Ottoman Government had rung the death-knell of their dominions—not only in Europe but in Asia." David Lloyd George went even further: "He did not know what the Turks had contributed either to culture, to art, or to any aspect of human progress. They were a human cancer a creeping agony in the flesh of the lands which they misgoverned, and rotting every fibre of life." Sir Edward Grey, the secretary of state for foreign affairs, at the luncheon of the Foreign Press Association expressed the view that events taking place in the empire were happening on an "unprecedented scale," aiming "to exterminate the Christians." Guided by national interest, Britain decided to play the trump card: the motto of Cross against Crescent was considered to produce the desired effect to bring the Christian world together against the threat of "barbarians."

Russia's attitude toward the Ottomans was certainly not friendlier than Britain's. Russia claimed to be the protector of the Christians in the Ottoman Empire (Greeks and Serbs were the targets of Russian incitement in the Balkans and the Armenians in the eastern provinces). Soon after the declaration of war Tsar Nicholas II made it clear that he had devoted himself to this cause. Armenian Catholicos Gevork V made an appeal "to liberate the Turkish Armenians and take them under Russian protection" by taking advantage of the empire's weak position and introducing the Armenian Question onto the international stage. In response the tsar said, "Tell your flock, Holy Father, that a most brilliant future awaits the Armenians." What the Armenians did not know was that the tsar was "not at all keen to incorporate," to quote Akaby Nassibian:

the Armenian vilayets did not wish to have much to do with Armenians, as the Russian ambassador had told Sir Arthur Nicholson, the under-secretary for foreign affairs, during a conversation in 1915. Nor did they know that during the Sykes Picot negotiations Russia had insisted that Sivas and Lesser Armenia should go to France and in return it should get Kurdish populated Hakkari-Muş in the East. The reason had been Tsarist Russia's desire to have "as few Armenians as possible" in the Russian territory and to be relieved of Armenian nationalist responsibilities. 36

Having abandoned the policy of Ottoman integrity the French authorities agreed to the territorial demands of the Armenians. In return for the Armenian support of the Eastern Foreign Legion, the French Foreign Ministry promised to grant the Armenians Cilicia, which would fall to the share of France after the war.³⁷ The only objection to the acceptance of the proposal taking the issue to an international arena came from the German government, on the grounds that "it was impossible to get reliable information on the real condition of the Armenians in the Armenian provinces, that the implementation of reforms was a very delicate question, that the Armenians had engaged in provocative actions, and that in any case they constituted only a very tiny minority of the population."38 As can be seen from this quotation, Germany followed a different course from Britain, France, and Russia regarding the whole issue. In his report to the German Foreign Ministry dated June 10, 1913, Hans Freiherr von Wangenheim, the German ambassador to Istanbul, drew a parallel between the Armenian Question and the policy of the Great Powers:

The reasons for Armenian agitation are clear and evident: the Christian races in European Turkey have been delivered from Turkish domination; now the Christians of Asia Minor want to be delivered. But in the case of the Armenians there are no brother allies who can take up the sword to rescue them. For this reason all their hopes are dependent upon the goodwill of the major powers. In the opinion of the Armenians, it is a mistake not to take advantage of a time when government cabinets are busy with the winding up of Turkey-in-Europe and with the future of Turkey-in-Asia.³⁹

Just before the war, in May 1915, the Armenian Congress gathered in Petersburg and clearly demonstrated the Armenians' commitment to the Allied cause:

A great disaster is descending upon us and this is because of our sympathy for the Allied Powers and because of the present stand taken by the Armenian nation. The French charmingly call us "our little allies."...Right from the start our sympathy was completely for the Allied Powers. Among these, Russia, to whom Armenians had been loyal throughout history, came first and foremost. The Armenians greeted the Russians with ringing bells and with their priests dressed in their ceremonial robes.... Although before the war, special discussions were being held between the Armenian and Turkish leaders, when the Turks tried to win the Armenians over to their side, this proposal was furiously rejected by the Armenians.⁴⁰

Moreover, the statement issued by the Dashnaksutyun Party clearly showed that the Armenians had interpreted the war waged by the Great Powers as a struggle for the liberation and independence of the oppressed nations: "We are fighting for a great cause, for our emancipation. We are not alone in this war, for the civilised nations of Europe are also fighting with us against the German vandals and the Turkish bashi-bazouks. The hour has come for the liberation of Armenia. Armenians arm yourselves against the Turks." ⁴¹

Thus the Eastern Question devolved from the Balkans to eastern Anatolia and was renamed the Armenian Question. This time the empire's Anatolian lands became the main points of debate. While the Ottoman

armies were putting up a fight against the occupying powers on several fronts (Caucasia, Mesopotamia, Gallipoli, and the Sinai), the Armenians in the eastern part of Turkey revolted against the Ottoman state at a most critical time when the Russian armies launched an offensive against Van in the east and when the Allied forces landed in the Gallipoli peninsula in April 1915 in the west. In the absence of strong central leadership that could ensure economic sufficiency and political stability as well as inadequate human and financial resources (without enough troops and equipment to deal with the widespread insurgency), the Ottoman government decided to remove the insurgent Armenians (who cut off communications lines, interdicted roads, constructed roadblocks to close roads, and cut telegram wires) from the war zone to the south and passed a resolution called "Relocation and Settlement" through the Ottoman parliament on May 27, 1915. To quote Edward Erickson:

The dynamics of operating in wartime with a resource-constrained force structure intersected with the imperative of national security drove Ottoman decision makers, who themselves were steeped in the practical application of counter-insurgency practices, to seek a rapid and complete resolution of the Armenian insurrection before it caused the collapse of the Ottoman field armies deployed in the eastern reaches of the Empire.⁴³

In response to the Allies' protests against the law the Ottoman government, having taken into consideration that the right to take every measure to suppress revolutionary and separatist activities emanates from the state's legal rights of sovereignty, declared that "it had merely exercised its sovereign right of self-defence against a revolutionary movement, and the responsibility for everything that had happened in the Armenian districts had to be borne exclusively by the Entente Powers themselves, because they had organised and directed the revolutionary movement in the first place." "44"

As Erickson notes, "The speed and ferocity of the Ottoman counterinsurgency campaign was a function of imperative military necessity": "in fact, actual Armenian threats to the logistics and security of three Ottoman armies caused the Ottomans to consider the potentially catastrophic effect on the national security of the Ottoman Empire should these armies collapse." It is widely acknowledged that the war conditions did not permit the operations to be carried out more satisfactorily. The empire suffered from severe shortages of vehicles, food, fuel, clothing, and other supplies as well as large-scale plague and famine. Under these conditions many lives were lost, Christians as well as Muslims.

The Russian Revolution of 1917 was one of the most important events that altered the course of the war. It not only changed the whole aspect of the Armenian Question but also resulted in the weakening of the Allies, forcing them to redefine their policies. The Bolsheviks had publicized the Allied agreements to the partitioning of historic Armenia between tsarist Russia and France. For over a century the conflicting policies of Britain and Russia in the Middle East had been considered the main cause of the misfortunes of the Armenians in the empire. This unexpected development once again had the potential of leading to undesired consequences. The British government was fully aware of the dire consequences of a Turkish breakthrough. Germany and Austria-Hungary would gain the valuable oil resources of Baku, and the Turks would attempt to realize their pan-Turanian goal of unifying the Turkic-speaking Muslim peoples of Caucasus, Transcaspia, and Central Asia under Turkish leadership. 46

Thus after the Bolshevik revolution the British depended on the Armenians to block the Turkish offensive. On November 24, 1917, Mark Sykes, a British government advisor on Middle Eastern Affairs, noted: "The Armenian Question is the real answer to pan-Turanism just as free Arabia is the answer to Turkish pan-Islamism." In early December the British government resolved to finance, arm, organize, and train Armenian and Georgian troops on the Caucasian front. In Artin Arslanian's words, "British pledges regarding Armenia, like those to Arabs regarding Syria, Mesopotamia and Palestine, were primarily a device to encourage the Armenian war efforts, favourably impress the neutral countries, and weaken the Central Powers by appealing to the national aspirations of ethnic minorities living under their control."

Soon after the Alexander Kerensky government was overthrown in November by the Bolsheviks, the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk was signed with the Ottoman government on March 3, 1918, allowing the Ottomans to regain the eastern provinces as well as Kars, Ardahan, and Batum. While the advance of the Ottoman armies in the Caucasus continued, Georgia declared its independence on May 26, 1918, and two days later the establishment of the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan was announced along with establishment of the Armenian Republic in Yerevan. The Ottoman government was first to recognize the independent Armenian Republic by signing the Treaty of Batum on June 3, 1918.

The Great War brought defeat for the Ottomans. Soon after the signature of the humiliating Mudros Armistice on October 30, 1918,⁴⁹ the Allies worked out the details of the peace treaty that was signed by the Ottoman delegation in August 1920 at Sèvres, in line with their wartime secret agreements. The Treaty of Sèvres was the Allied solution to the centuries-old Eastern Question but not the final one.⁵⁰ The treaty drafted by the Allies recognized an Armenian state in the eastern provinces. The envisaged plan, however, encountered difficulties when a Turkish nationalist movement under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal emerged in Anatolia and swiftly grew into a major power, forcing the Allies to revise their stand.

Although a "wide spectrum of British public and the high rank British officials were sympathetic" toward Armenian claims, "expediency and considerations of national interests, rather than moral commitments, shaped post-war British policy."51 Britain simply shifted its policy: the Armenians were seen "as pawns in the struggle to contain Bolshevism," and the independence of the Caucasian Republics would "prevent an alliance between the Bolsheviks and the Kemalists and would also serve as a barrier against the Bolshevik advance on Persia, a great key position in British imperial defence."52 Moreover, Britain would avoid trouble in India and Egypt by pleasing the Muslim population there. When the British withdrew from Transcaucasia in the spring and early summer of 1920, the Armenian Republic found itself isolated, facing the revolutionary expansionism of the Russian Bolsheviks on one side and the pressures of Mustafa Kemal's nationalists on the other. An armistice signed between Kemalist nationalists and Armenia secured the renunciation of the Treaty of Sèvres on the part of the Armenians.

The Great Powers displayed no intention of backing up the Armenians because Kemalist Turkey was considered the only possible bulwark against Soviet expansionism after the collapse of the Caucasian Republics. Each of the Great Powers had its own reasons to abandon the Armenian case. France and Italy tried to establish friendly relations with the Kemalists, each signing separate friendship agreements in 1921. France endeavored to remain on amicable terms with the Ankara government, as it had enormous capital invested in the public sector. Moreover, France felt that it had been let down by the British over the Rhine issue. Italy also backed nationalist Turkey because of the support given by the British to the Greeks and because of the expectations of economic gains in Anatolia. The nationalists also concluded the Treaty of Moscow in March 1921, which settled the border between Russia and Turkey.

The Great Powers, however, made an attempt to convene a conference in order to deal with the problems resulting from the peace treaties that ended World War I, most notably the Treaty of Sèvres with the Ottoman Empire. Two Armenian representatives, Boghos Nubar and Avetis Aharonian, were heard at the conference. Article 9 of the London Treaty of 1921 made the following change in terms of the Sèvres Treaty with regard to Armenian independence: "The present terms of agreement guaranteed to the Armenians may be amended by recognising the right of the Armenians to a national home near the eastern borders of Asiatic Turkey in accordance with the resolution of the League of Nations for securing the resettlement of the Armenians in a suitable and acceptable place." 53

The terms of article 88 of the Sèvres Treaty for a "free and independent state" were replaced by a vague and indefinite commitment for a "national home." This change had been suggested by the American missionaries as a compromise solution, enabling the Armenians to establish their autonomy. On September 21 the League of Nations resolved that the national home had to be separate and independent from Turkey. Yet the Kemalist military victory in Anatolia would put an effective end to this project. With the signature of the Mudanya Convention in 1922 the national struggle transitioned into a diplomatic struggle that would take place at Lausanne. The Lausanne Peace Conference would provide a platform where age-old accounts were settled. The Eastern Question as well as the Armenian Question came to an end.

CONCLUSION

The Eastern Question—what should become of the Ottoman Empire—constituted the major issue on the agenda of international relations for more than a century and a half. Due to their political and economic interests in the Ottoman territory, the Great Powers constantly tried to establish their hegemony by setting one Ottoman community against the other. With the demise of the Ottoman Empire these powers supported the Armenians in the eastern part of Anatolia and made every effort to bring the issue to the forefront of the diplomatic forums in the international political system. In order to further their interests the Great Powers acted as if Armenian lives were their pawns. By manipulating the Armenians, whose great devotion to the Ottoman Empire over the course of centuries had gained them the name *millet-i sadıka* (the loyal people), the Great Powers produced the same crushing results in Anatolia that they had already brought about in the Balkan lands of the empire.

Although the Armenian Question is essentially a follow-up to the Eastern Question, the Great Powers mastered a formula according to which the problem had originated in Turkish politics. Indeed it shifted focus away from the real problem: the Eastern Question. As its title might suggest, the Eastern Question was raised in the West. The problems, which conveniently called for interference by the Great Powers, began in 1878 with Western endeavors to inflame the non-Muslim minorities of the Ottoman Empire.

An academic effort to understand 1915 cannot start with 1915. The tragic events that took place during World War I followed a whole chain of events that cannot be overlooked in a sincere attempt to find the historical reasons for the Armenian problem. Central to the course of events was the use of the Armenian Question as part of the "divide and rule" approach dictated by the Eastern Question. The painful backlashes of imperialism are well documented and frequently discussed now. But for some unfortunate and unscholarly reason the ill effects of imperialism are underemphasized in the case of the Armenian Question. This denial of historical processes is caused by the refusal to consider the Turks to have been victims of imperialism along with the Armenians.

NOTES

- 1. Tanzimat (Reorganization) in 1839, Islahat (Imperial Rescript) in 1856, the Constitutional period of 1876, and the Young Turk Revolution (or the Second Constitutional period) in 1908 were the desperate steps taken by the Ottoman state machinery to prevent the decline already in progress. World War I (1914 to 1918) was only the culmination of this long process of dissolution.
- Ottoman Archives, Yıldız Collection: The Armenian Question, edited by Ertuğrul Zekai Ökte, vol. 1 (Istanbul: Foundation for Establishing and Promoting Centers for Historical Research and Documentation, 1989); Türkkaya Ataöv, Armenian Falsifications, 125.
- Sevtap Demirci, British Public Opinion towards the Ottoman Empire during the Two Crises, 13. For more on nationalism, see Roderic H. Davison, "Nationalism as an Ottoman Problem and the Ottoman Response," 385–407.
- 4. Feroz Ahmad, From Empire to Republic, 94.
- 5. It should be noted that before the Turco-Russian War of 1877–78 the Armenian elite who were educated in missionary schools and European universities already showed signs of unrest. To quote Hakan Yavuz: "[T]hey, like many other communities, had long-standing grievances over taxation, equality, land grabs, and insecurity." When their political demands and expectations of better economic conditions for the peasants in Anatolia were not met satisfactorily by the Porte, they were quick to resort to more radical and revolutionary solutions. M. Hakan Yavuz, "The Transformation of 'Empire' through Wars and Reforms," 41.

- 6. Süleyman Kocabaş, Ermeni Meselesi— Nedir Ne Değildir?, 39–40. Although some Armenians were pro-Ottoman, others were not (the patriarchate). Those who were systematically subjected to Russian incitement remained pro-Russian. In Yavuz's words, "what really transformed the Ottoman perception of the Armenians as a security concern was the occasional Armenian cooperation with the occupying Russian troops and the active involvement of Patriarch Nerses Varjabedian (Vartabedyan) in the Congress of Berlin. He was active in sending letters to Bismarck and Salisbury and also sending a delegation to fight for an 'autonomous Armenia.'" Yavuz, "The Transformation of 'Empire," 41.
- 7. Akaby Nassibian, *Britain and the Armenian Question*, 1915–1923, 6 (quotation); Arman J. Kirakossian, *British Diplomacy and the Armenian Question from the 1830s to 1914*, 340–41.
- 8. F.R. Bridge and Robert Bullen, *The Great Powers and the European State System*, 123. For official documents, see *Ottoman Archives*, 2: 411–15.
- 9. Bridge and Bullen, *The Great Powers and the European State System*, 124. In return for easing the clauses of the San Stefano Treaty, Britain acquired Cyprus from the Ottomans. The publication by the *London Globe* of the secret Cyprus Convention between Britain and the Ottoman Empire almost broke up the Congress. The French and Russian ambassadors declared themselves "outraged at the English ill-faith." This was a good example of how delicate and fragile relations could be among the Great Powers when it came to sharing the spoils of the empire. *The Ottoman Archives*, 2:411–14; William Hale, "Introduction: The Historical Background," in William Hale and A. I. Bağış, eds., *Four Centuries of Turco-British Relations: Studies in Diplomatic, Economic, and Cultural Affairs* (Huntingdon: Eothen Press, 1984), 4; Sir James Knowles, *The Nineteenth Century* (London: Henry S. King and Company, 1896), 839 (quotation).
- 10. Ottoman Archives, 2:412-14.
- 11. Bilal Şimşir, Ermeni Meselesi, 119 (quotation); Kocabaş, Ermeni Meselesi, 62–63.
- 12. Garabet K. Moumdjian, "From Millet-i Sadıka to Millet-i Asiya," 306.
- 13. Esat Uras, The Armenians in History and the Armenian Question, 477.
- 14. F. R. Bridge and Robert Bullen, *The Great Powers and the European States System*, 119–20. For more on the Great Powers' policy, see Bayram Kodaman, "The Eastern Question."
- 15. Akaby Nassibian, *Britain and the Armenian Question*, 13. The grand vezir Cevat Paşa, in his letter to Sultan Abdülhamid dated December 5, 1894, commented: "The British aim at, may God forbid, the partitioning the Supreme Ottoman State. It is understood that Lord Rothschild, after the settlement of the Jews at Damascus, is trying to set up a Jewish administration there, and an Armenian administration in Anatolia, together with an Arab administration in Arabia.... Under these circumstances what reforms are proposed to avoid such detrimental situations to the state?" *Ottoman Archives*, 2:133.
- 16. Bilal N. Şimşir, ed., British Documents on Ottoman Armenians, 1891–1895; the Earl of Rosebery to Sir J. Pauncefote, Dec. 28, 1892, No. 104, 145; Kemal Çiçek; "Halep Amerikan Konsolosu J. B. Jackson ve Ermeni Tehcirindeki Yeri," 204–23.
- 17. Justin McCarthy, *The Turk in America*, 219 (quotation); Enis Şahin, "Önemli Bir Ermeni Propaganda Dergisi." For the European press's approach to the relocations,

- see Vahdettin Engin, "Ermeni Tehciri Sırasında Bazı Avrupa Gazetelerinin Tutumu," 224–32.
- 18. James Joll, The Origins of the First World War, 161-62.
- Brad Dennis; "Patterns of Conflict and Violence in Eastern Anatolia Leading Up to the Russo-Turkish War and the Treaty of Berlin," 277.
- 20. Ibid., 277-78.
- 21. These events included the demonstration of Kumkapı, Istanbul (1890); the rebellion of Sasun (1894); the demonstration of Bâb-ı Âlî (1895); the rebellion of Zeytun (1895–96); and the seizure of the Ottoman Bank in Istanbul (1896).
- 22. Great Britain, Foreign Office Blue Books, *Turkey*, no. 6: Correspondence respecting the Condition of the Christian Subjects of the Porte (1894), 222–23.
- 23. Ottoman Archives, 1:xvii–xviii. For more on Sultan Abdülhamid II's view on the Armenian Question, see Şimşir, British Documents on Ottoman Armenians, No. 78, Sir Clare Ford (Istanbul) to the Earl of Rosebery (London), April 7, 1893; No. 120, 165; Sir A. Nicolson (Istanbul) to the Earl of Rosebery (London), September 6, 1893, No. 190, 269–70; Sir P. Currie (Istanbul) to Earl of Kimberley, January 18, 1895, No. 369, 504; Sir P. Currie (Istanbul) to Earl of Kimberley, March 27, 1895, No. 439, 586; Brad Dennis, "The Debate in the Early Armenian Question, 1877–1896," 273.
- 24. Nassibian, *Britain and the Armenian Question*, 26. For more details on European investments in the Ottoman Empire, see 25–28.
- 25. Ahmad, From Empire to Republic, 129, 122.
- 26. Komitadjis were members of secret revolutionary groups and bands of "brigands" who fought against the government forces.
- 27. In fact the employment of Armenian subjects in place of Greeks had begun right after the Greek uprising in 1821. In the Reform Edict of 1856, following the Tanzimat of 1839, the members of the Armenian community were appointed to responsible positions as governors, generals, inspectors, ambassadors, and cabinet ministers. Enver Ziya Karal, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, 126–27; Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, 200; "Report on Armenians" sent by Hans Freiherr von Wangenheim, the German ambassador in Istanbul, to the German Foreign Ministry on June 10, 1913: *Ottoman Archives*, 1:xvi–xvii.
- 28. Moumdjian, "From Millet-i Sadıka to Millet-i Asiya," 335, 339.
- 29. Ahmad, From Empire to Republic, 130.
- 30. Guenter Lewy, *The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey*, 36. For the policy of Russia, see Sean McMeekin, *The Russian Origins of the First World War*, 141–73.
- 31. Ahmad, From Empire to Republic, 130.
- 32. Quoted in Lewy, The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey, 37.
- 33. Graham Ross, The Great Powers and the Decline of the European States System, 1914–1945, I.
- 34. Joll, The Origins of the First World War, 195.
- 35. All three quoted in Nassibian, *Britain and the Armenian Question*, 53. Grey's anti-Turkish stance was made clear well before World War I. When the Turkish armies suffered a series of shattering defeats at the hands of the Balkan states and were driven out of Macedonia. the British authorities welcomed the news with

- considerable enthusiasm. This view was echoed in Grey's words: "British public opinion would not be a party to an attempt to turn the Balkan states by force out of territory which they actually conquered by their own arms, and we had not sufficient political interest to insist upon interfering in the results of the war": Grey to Goschen, October 28, 1912, in *British Documents on the Origins of the War*, 1898–1914, ed. G. P. Gooch and Harold Temperley, 9, part 2, 70.
- Nassibian, Britain and the Armenian Question, 108; Uras, The Armenians in History, 625 (quotations in both books).
- 37. For more detail on French policy, see Gothard Jaeschke, *Kurtuluş Savaşı ile ilgili İngiliz Belgeleri*, 47; Yücel Güçlü, *Armenians and the Allies in Cilicia*, 1914–1923, 51–163.
- 38. Uras, *The Armenians in History*, 635–36.
- 39. Ottoman Archives, 1:xvii—xix. From Germany's point of view, the Armenians educated in British and French schools lived in the empire, developed examplary trade relations with these countries, and therefore posed a threat to Germany's economic expectations in the empire. The many millet members engaged in the import and export trade with European merchants often were given diplomatic passports or protection by European powers and increased in number after 1774. Roderic H. Davison, "The Millets as Agents of Change in the Nineteenth–Century Ottoman Empire," 409–28.
- 40. Uras, *The Armenians in History*, 853–54 (quotation); Türkkaya Ataöv, *Osmanlı Ermenilerine Ne Oldu?* (Istanbul: İleri Yayıncılık, 2007), 52–62.
- 41. Uras, *The Armenians in History*, 861. For more on the activities of Armenian revolutionary organizations, see Sadi Koçaş, *Tarih Boyunca Ermeniler ve Türk-Ermeni İlişkileri*, 121–66; *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeni İsyanları*, Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, Osmanlı Arşivi Daire Başkanlığı (Ankara: Başbakanlık Basımevi, 2008–9), vol. 1 (1878–1895), vol. 2 (1895–1896), vol. 3 (1896–1909), vol. 4 (1909–1916).
- 42. For the details of the resolution, see *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler (1915–1920)*(Ankara: Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, Osmanlı Arşivi Daire Başkanlığı, 1995, no. 14), 30–36; Kamuran Gürün, *Ermeni Dosyası*, 211–29; Nurşen Mazıcı, *Uluslararası Rekabette Ermeni Sorunu'nun Kökeni 1878–1920*, 102–110. For the Ottoman official documents captured by the British intelligence officers on the relocation of Armenians, see Salahi R. Sonyel, "Tehcir ve Kırımlar Konusunda Ermeni Propagandası, Hristiyanlık Dünyasını Nasıl Aldattı," 137–56.
- 43. Edward J. Erickson, "Template for Destruction," 372.
- 44. Ulrich Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire, 1914–1918*, 210. For the revolutionary activities of the Armenian organizations, see Salahi R. Sonyel, "Yeni Belgelerin İşığında Ermeni Tehcirleri," 49; H. Erdoğan Cengiz, ed., *Ermeni Komitelerinin A'mal ve Harekat-ı İhtilaliyesi; Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeni İsyanları* (Ankara: Başbakanlık Basımevi, 2009): vol. 1 (1878–1895), No. 95; vol. 2 (1895–1896), No. 96; vol. 3 (1876–1909), No. 98; vol. 4 (1909–1916), No. 99.
- Edward J. Erickson, "The Armenian Relocations and Ottoman National Security, 1915," 291–92. For different scholarly approaches to the events of 1915, see M. Hakan Yavuz, "Contours of Scholarship on Armenian-Turkish Relations."
- 46. Artin H. Arslanian, "British Wartime Pledges, 1917–18," 519.

- 47. Quoted in ibid., 520.
- 48. Ibid., 522.
- 49. Contrary to Armenian expectations, the Mudros Armistice put the eastern vilayets under Ottoman rule and gave the Allies the right to occupy these six vilayets in case of disorder.
- 50. Sevtap Demirci, Strategies and Struggles, 9.
- 51. Arslanian, "British Wartime Pledges," 525.
- 52. Nassibian, Britain and the Armenian Question, 190.
- 53. Uras, The Armenians in History, 965.
- 54. Ibid.

A Last Attempt to Solve the Armenian Question

The Reform of 1914

Ahmet Seyhun

Throughout most of their modern history until the nineteenth century the Armenians lived peacefully under Ottoman rule and prospered. Nevertheless, conditions had started to change by the early nineteenth century. During the 1830s Sultan Mahmud II (r. 1808–39) reestablished direct Ottoman rule over the semiautonomous Kurdish emirates in eastern Anatolia. Furthermore, during the Tanzimat era (1839-76) a new Ottoman provincial administration was introduced, which concerned fiscal matters in particular and provided some modern services to the population. In reality these new conditions meant double taxation for the Armenian peasantry, a situation that weighed heavily on the Armenians and became one of the main causes of what would later be known as the Armenian Question. Until the Tanzimat reforms Kurds and Armenians had established a sort of feudal relationship in which Kurdish asirets (tribes) protected the Armenian villages and in turn received some payments and services from them. By the time Ottoman modernization efforts introduced by Sultan Mahmud II and his successors reached eastern Anatolia, the relationship between these two ethnic groups began to change, inevitably for the worse.

IMPACT OF THE TANZIMAT REFORMS ON THE ARMENIANS

With the promulgation of the Tanzimat Edict on November 3, 1839, the Ottoman Armenians in the empire were granted some new rights. One of the landmarks of modern Armenian history in this sense was the

promulgation of the Armenian National Constitution on March 17, 1863, as well as the formation of an Armenian Assembly, to which members were directly elected.¹

Although the opening of this assembly drastically improved the political and social conditions of the Armenians living in the main urban centers of the empire by making their voices heard by the Porte and the embassies of the Great Powers in the Ottoman capital, the Armenian peasants living within the limits of their historical homeland were enduring harsh lives in the six vilayets in eastern Anatolia at the hands of the Kurdish aghas. In the eastern provinces of the empire one of the major complaints of the Armenians was the systematic oppression and exploitation exerted on them by the Kurdish tribal leaders. Throughout the centuries Armenian peasants and nomadic Kurds lived in an unequal relationship as Kurdish sheikhs and aghas protected Armenians but in turn exacted taxes (called *hala* and *hafir*) from them. Moreover, the Armenian villagers also had to provide housing to the Kurdish people in their villages during the winter, a practice called *kışlak*.²

The Armenian cultural efflorescence that began to take place during the Tanzimat era played an important role in the emergence of a new awareness. Indeed the new cultural and social awareness of the Armenian people induced many to ask for equal rights with their Muslim neighbors. In the end the Tanzimat reforms benefited Armenians economically: like other Christian ethnic groups in the empire, they came to be better off than many of their Muslim neighbors. Now better educated and prosperous, Armenians became increasingly unwilling to accept their limited status, which generations of their ancestors had conceded. Consequently, relationships between the Kurds and Armenians deteriorated and were eventually transformed from cooperation into confrontation. By the beginning of the nineteenth century the Armenian population living within the limits of their historical homeland was reduced to between one-third and one-fourth of the total population of the eastern Anatolian provinces.

RUSSIA'S ROLE IN THE RISE OF THE ARMENIAN QUESTION

Another important factor that affected the Armenian community living in the Ottoman Empire was the Russian expansion toward the Ottoman lands in the Caucasus. In 1783 Russia had established its protectorate over the Kingdom of Georgia, but Russian troops later evacuated

the country. In 1801, after the invasion of Georgia by the Persian ruler Aga-Muhammad Khan, Russia took advantage of Georgian weakness and gradually annexed the country between 1801 and 1810. The Armenian population living in eastern Anatolia came in direct contact with the Russians after this occupation of the southern Caucasus. Russia's territorial expansion to the south toward the Ottoman lands prepared the ground for dramatic changes. During the Ottoman-Russian Wars in 1828-29 and the Crimean War of 1853-56, Russian armies defeated the Ottoman armies and invaded eastern Anatolia. Russia's imperial rise in the region had naturally had important impacts on the Ottoman Armenians living in these lands. Nevertheless the beginning of the Armenian Question in the Ottoman Empire should only be dated to the disastrous 1877-78 Ottoman-Russian War and the ensuing treaties of San Stefano and Berlin. With these treaties the situation of the Armenians living in the eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire became an issue of international diplomacy, which would continue to preoccupy the chancelleries of the Great Powers. Only after securing the support of the Great Powers did Armenians start to agitate for more legal and political rights.

At the end of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-78, when the victorious Russian army was camped in Aya Stefanos (San Stefano) in February (then an Ottoman village just outside of Constantinople/Istanbul), the Armenian patriarch Nerses Vartabedyan (Varjabedian) traveled to the Russian military headquarters to pay homage to the Grand Duke Nicholas, the commander of the Russian army and a brother of Tsar Alexander II (1855-81). At San Stefano the patriarch handed a letter to Grand Duke Nicholas, pleading with him and the tsar to extend Russia's protection to the Ottoman Armenians. The patriarch allegedly declared that "the Armenians of Turkey should place their hopes in the illustrious Russian Emperor who has won great and glorious victories in Europe and Asia," beseeching his interlocutor to heed his pleas as "the person who has drawn his sword from its sheath in defense of the Eastern Christians." A people attached to their ancestral homeland live in Turkey. They desired autonomous rule, which he argued would be easy to establish. What Armenians wanted, the patriarch said, was to live peacefully and without any oppression by another power, preserving their homeland and their religious freedom.3

These requests would be taken into consideration: Armenian demands were included in the San Stefano peace treaty, which was signed between the Ottoman and Russian empires on March 3, 1878. Article 16 of the treaty stipulated: "In order to avoid conflicts and complications

detrimental to the maintenance of good relations between the two empires, the Sublime Porte would carry into effect, without further delay, the improvements and reforms demanded by local requirements in the provinces inhabited by Armenians, and would guarantee their security from Kurds and Circassians." According to the treaty, Russian troops would only depart from eastern Anatolia (where they were stationed) after the Ottoman government implemented these stipulated reforms.

THE BERLIN TREATY AND BRITAIN AS THE GUARANTOR OF ARMENIAN RIGHTS

Despite Russia's definite victory over the Ottoman Empire in the wars of 1877-78, the Great Powers (especially Britain, Germany, and Austria) did not want Russia to establish supremacy over the Balkans and dominate the Ottoman Empire. Thus they decided to intervene diplomatically. At the Berlin Conference, convened in early July to solve the Eastern Question, Russia was compelled by the Great Powers to relinquish its gains on the battlefield. According to the new treaty signed on July 13, 1878, the Russian troops had to evacuate the eastern Anatolian provinces. Nonetheless, article 61 of the Berlin Treaty, which replaced article 16 of the San Stefano Treaty, also compelled the Porte to carry out certain administrative reforms in the provinces of eastern Anatolia inhabited by the Armenian minority. According to this key article: "The Sublime Porte undertakes to carry out, without further delay, the improvements and reforms demanded by local requirements in the provinces inhabited by the Armenians, and to guarantee their security against the Circassians and the Kurds.... It will periodically make known the steps taken to this effect to the Powers, who will superintend their application."5

Unlike the San Stefano accord, the Berlin Treaty did not stipulate the continuation of the Russian occupation in the vilayets until major reforms were carried out. In fact, it was left up to the sultan to comply with the reforms, which certainly presented a problem.

In the aftermath of the Ottoman-Russian War of 1877–78 and the Treaty of Berlin, Armenians in the Ottoman Empire began to organize politically. Between 1880 and 1890 many Armenian political organizations and groups were established, including the Armenakan, founded in 1885 in the city of Van, which was followed by the Socialist Hunchak Party, established in Geneva in 1887, and later by the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (known as the ARF or Dashnaktsutyun), founded in Tbilisi in 1890. Both the Hunchak and Dashnak parties were established

by Armenians from Russia, as members of the two organizations formed armed guerrilla groups and began to attack Kurdish tribes and Ottoman army units.⁶

ARMENIAN INSURGENCY IN EASTERN ANATOLIA

In 1891–92 Hunchak militants (fedais) incited the Armenian peasants in the Sasun region to refuse to pay their taxes to the Kurdish aghas. Clashes occurred between the armed Armenians and the Kurdish tribesmen, who asked for help from the government for the collection of their dues. In June 1894 the kaymakam of Kulp came to the Talori district of Sasun accompanied by some gendarmes (zaptiyes) and asked for the unpaid taxes overdue from the past years.⁷ Armenians backed by the Hunchak militants again refused to pay but also insulted the Ottoman officials and chased them away from their villages. The Armenian villagers' resistance to the Ottoman authorities was considered to be a rebellion by the Porte. Ottoman troops were sent to the region to subdue the Armenians. Soon these troops, assisted by the Kurdish irregular forces, began to attack the Armenian villages. In the late summer of 1894 and fall of 1896, across all the eastern provinces of the empire, tens of thousands of Armenian inhabitants were massacred by the irregular Kurdish Hamidiye cavalry regiments, supported on many occasions by regular Ottoman army troops. Entire villages were wiped out, and mass atrocities were committed. The European chancelleries reacted to the massacres and forced Abdülhamid to issue an edict of reforms for the eastern Anatolian provinces. Still, the sultan implemented his own decree and again shelved his reform plans.

Throughout his long reign Sultan Abdülhamid II managed to thwart the diplomatic pressures exerted by the Great Powers to apply article 61 of the Berlin Treaty by following an astute policy of appeasement. Abdülhamid skillfully manipulated the international balance of power and managed to obtain the acquiescence of the Russian government because Tsar Alexander III (r. 1881–94) and the tsar's successor, Nicholas II (r. 1894–1917), continued the same policy of Russification of non-Russian minorities. The Russian government was not friendly to the Armenians at least until 1905. Russia wanted "an Armenia without Armenians," as expressed by the Russian foreign minister Aleksey Lobanov-Rostovsky. In actuality Russia was persecuting and oppressing its own Armenian population in Transcaucasia, fearing the rise of separatist and ethnic-nationalist ideas

there. Furthermore, the Russian government expropriated properties belonging to the Armenian Church. In 1905 (in the aftermath of the revolution) Russian authorities in the Caucasus instigated Muslims to attack Armenians as a policy of divide and rule. As a result Armenians and Azeris were caught up in ethnic clashes in which tens of thousands of Muslim Azeris and Christian Armenians were massacred.

Therefore the origins of the Armenian crisis in the Ottoman Empire can be found in the Treaty of Berlin. Article 61 required the Porte to implement certain administrative reforms in the six provinces of eastern Anatolia, where a significant number of Armenians lived. Nevertheless, throughout his long reign Sultan Abdülhamid II vehemently opposed the application of article 61 of the Berlin Treaty. The sultan believed that it would undermine Ottoman sovereignty in the heartland of the empire and prepare the ground for the eventual secession of the eastern Anatolian provinces. Accordingly, Abdülhamid managed to thwart the political pressure exerted by the European powers at the cost of many concessions.

ARMENIANS AND THE YOUNG TURKS

In their common struggle against the Hamidian regime the Armenian revolutionaries had collaborated with the Young Turks to topple the sultan. After the 1908 revolution, the Dashnaktsutyun and the CUP had tried to maintain good relations with each other. Gaidz F. Minassian calls the aftermath of the 1908 revolution a period of democratic illusion (illusion démocratique), when the Central Committee of the Dashnaktsutyun genuinely believed that the Armenian Question could be peacefully solved within the Ottoman Empire. 12 This was a time of mutual friendship and cooperation between the CUP and the ARF. Armenians were exuberant: "Toute l'humanité libérale salue le superbe coup des Jeunes-Turcs," wrote Mikayel Varandian at the Armenian newspaper *Droshak.* ¹³ In August 1908, less than one month after the revolution, the ARF declared after a meeting between Cemal Paşa and Yervant Agnouni that "the Armenians are ready to work hand in hand with the CUP." On September 1, 1908, in a statement published by *Droshak*, the ARF again declared that the federation "acknowledge[d] constitutional Turkey as an independent state having full sovereignty over all its territory, including Turkish Armenia as an inseparable part of the empire and having a decentralized administration." 14

This friendly attitude and support for the new regime was not shared by all the Armenian groups. Especially some fedai chiefs such as Roupen (Ruben) Ter Minassian operating in eastern Anatolia around Muş refused to give support to the constitutional regime and remained skeptical toward what he called an "illusionary peace." He established his base in a monastery near the city of Muş. 15

After October 1912 the political situation began to change: Armenian leaders in the Ottoman Empire started to criticize the Porte's policy in eastern Anatolia. ¹⁶ It may be argued that this attitude was encouraged by recent political and military events, including the defeat of the Ottoman armies in the Balkan Wars, which caused the amputation of almost all of the empire's European territories. These losses created consternation among all of the inhabitants throughout the empire and generated general despair and apprehension about the future of the empire and its survival. During the Balkan Wars, the Armenian patriarch along with the leaders of the Armenian community started to pressure the Ottoman government for reforms.

Krikor Zohrab wrote in his memoirs that the Balkan defeats put the Ottoman Empire in an extremely critical situation that provided a golden opportunity for the Armenians to take advantage of Turkish weakness and realize their goals. On December 21, 1912, the Armenian National Assembly unanimously accepted the proposal of Zohrab, who urged it to bring the Armenian Question to international attention. On this issue another leading member of the Armenian assembly wrote that "the central committee declared that after exhausting all other avenues the only solution to the Armenian Question remaining is its internationalization."17 This united stand of the different Armenian groups and organizations caught the Porte by surprise. Until then the various Armenian organizations had followed different policies and were never able to agree on any important issue. After the adoption of this resolution by the Armenian National Assembly the Armenian Patriarchate in Istanbul formed a commission to draft a reform project. Many Dashnaktsutyun members, such as Vahan Papazyan (Papazian), Rupen (Ruben) Zartarian, and Khachatur Malumian (Agnuni), played a crucial role in the preparation of the reform project. At the same time some other Armenian groups also prepared their own reform plans. One of the most important of these plans was prepared by Boghos Nubar Paşa. The ideas laid out in it were found impractical and even unrealistic by Papazyan, who traveled to Paris in order to convince Boghos Nubar to accept Dashnaktsutyun's project. 18

The deteriorating conditions in the eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire and constant petitions by Armenian political leaders (including the Armenian patriarch of Constantinople) to the Russian government gave Russians an opportunity to interfere in the internal affairs of the Ottomans. It started to ask for reforms to ameliorate the living conditions of the Armenians inhabiting the six eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire. This pressure exerted by the Armenian citizens of the empire and by St. Petersburg reached its peak during the summer of 1912. This coincided with one of the most critical times for the Ottomans, when they were facing serious internal crisis (the Albanian Revolt) and external aggressions (the Italian invasion of Libya). In November 1912, when Bulgarian armies were at the gates of Constantinople and the empire was fighting for its survival, Russians acting in conjunction with the Armenian leadership suddenly increased their pressure by bluntly asking for the application of the reforms stipulated in article 61 of the Berlin Treaty. The Porte, already apprehensive about Russian intentions in its eastern provinces, responded carefully and accepted the application of the reforms but opposed foreign, especially Russian, involvement.

ARMENIAN REFORM INITIATIVES

The Ottoman debacle in the Balkan Wars and increasing Armenian demands affected the Russian policies toward the Ottoman Empire. On October 7, 1912, the representatives of several Armenian organizations met at a conference in Tbilisi, Georgia, to ask for Russian intervention on behalf of Ottoman Armenians. 19 The Porte responded to contemplated Russian actions in eastern Anatolia by presenting a reform project concerning the provinces of Van, Bitlis, Harput, and Diyarbakır in December 1912. In April 1913 the Ottoman government adopted further measures to prevent a possible Russian intervention, asking the British government to provide experts to assist Ottoman officials in the implementation of the reforms in these provinces. The legal basis for this request was article 61 of the Treaty of Berlin as well as the Cyprus Convention of 1878. Said Halim Paşa wrote in his memoirs that the diplomatic pressure exerted by St. Petersburg on the British government caused the British, who had initially agreed, to decline the Porte's request: "Le Gouvernement Britannique, qui avait au début, acquiesce à la demande du Gouvernement ottoman, refusa au dernier moment d'y donner suite sur les démarches que fit la Russie à Londres de sorte que le projet ne put être realisé."²⁰

THE DIPLOMATIC GAME OVER EASTERN ANATOLIA

On the reform question the Ottomans found support in their German allies.²¹ Although Russia approached Britain and asked for full support for its initiative, London was rather cautious and suspicious about the intentions of St. Petersburg in Anatolia. Although an ally of Russia in the Triple Entente, Britain (like Germany) did not want to see Russia extending its influence in the region. Russia's other ally in the Entente also expressed reservations about St. Petersburg's moves. According to the French government, the reforms were not timely and needed to be postponed until the financial recovery of the empire was assured. The Ottoman state was in a fragile condition, in particular after the disastrous Balkan Wars, which amputated one-fifth of the empire's territory. As a move to secure support from the other Great Powers in order to forestall Russian moves, grand vezir Mahmut Şevket Paşa asked the British government to provide some officials to the Ottoman state to supervise the reforms in Armenia. C. B. Norman and Louis Mallet welcomed the Porte's request and recommended that the British government accept it. Mallet wrote: "We want Turkey to remain a power in Asia and we want reforms for the Armenians. Unless reforms are introduced, it is certain that Turkish Power will decline.... We are the only people who could undertake the duty and carry it through successfully and the only Power who would be allowed by the other Powers to undertake it."22 Britain, although willing to assist the Porte with reforms, did not want to alienate its ally Russia. On this issue the French ambassador in London, Paul Cambon, declared that the Porte would have no choice but to turn to Germany if Britain categorically rejected Ottoman requests, which would harm the interests of all the Entente powers. But Istanbul's decision to ask for British officials alarmed Berlin. The German ambassador at the Porte, Baron von Wangenheim, told the grand vezir that a similar role must be given to Germany in western Anatolia. In the meantime, as expected in London, Russia fiercely opposed the idea of having British officials at its borders in eastern Anatolia. Russian foreign minister Sergei Sazonov told Edward Grey that St. Petersburg could not accept playing second fiddle in the Armenian Question.²³ Furthermore, Russia threatened to intervene militarily if new massacres occurred in eastern Anatolia. Mahmut Şevket's idea of requesting British assistance was motivated mostly by a wish to counteract Russian influence in the eastern provinces of the empire. According to the grand vezir, only cooperation between Britain and Germany and their joint assistance could help the Porte to

solve the Armenian Question in eastern Anatolia. The only other Great Power that could be helpful was France, he added, for the financial reorganization of the empire. Mahmut Şevket would rely on Britain for the reforms in the fields of gendarmerie and justice, whereas Germany would be trusted to reform the army and the educational system.

On May 18, 1913, Said Halim Paşa sent a confidential note to Tevfik Paşa informing him about his government's intention to apply to Germany for the reorganization of the Ottoman army. The Ottoman government would also request some expert officials from Britain.²⁴ Ottomans justified their request by the Cyprus Convention, which stipulated British assistance to the Porte. Although the British government first considered this request positively, it eventually did not fulfill it because of very strong opposition from St. Petersburg. In the meantime the Russian government, supported by France, recommended that the 1895 Reform Project must be used as a model for eventual reform efforts. Britain was favorable to the idea at the beginning but later became less enthusiastic about it, not wanting Russia to gain the upper hand in the Armenian reforms. Germany wanted to assert its role as a Great Power and claim a share in the game and thus wanted to take the initiative. Therefore Gottlieb von Jagow, the German foreign minister, instructed Hans von Wangenheim, the German ambassador in Istanbul, to ask Said Halim Paşa his opinion about Germany initiating the Armenian reforms. Said Halim's reaction was strong and indignant. He told Wangenheim that to hear such a proposal was extremely distressful for him, because until then he had considered Germany to be a friendly power. But now he saw clearly that Berlin also was only interested in defending its own interests in the region. Moreover, Said Halim accused Germany of being pro-Armenian and anti-Muslim. It would have been understandable if the reform proposals had first come from Russia, which had not been considered a friendly power by the Ottomans. In the face of such a strong reaction, the German government decided not to initiate the matter at the London Conference.25

But Germany wanted Ottoman representatives to participate in the conference. Russia categorically opposed that view. Although at the beginning Britain and France agreed with the idea of Ottoman representation, they later had to take Russia's position in the face of St. Petersburg's uncompromising attitude.²⁶

On June 17, 1913, an international conference was organized in Istanbul. The ambassadors of the six Great Powers at the Porte, including Michael De Giers, the Russian envoy to Istanbul, submitted a reform plan

drafted by Andre Mandelstam, the first dragoman at the Russian Embassy in Istanbul. Mandelstam's project actually was a revised version of the project prepared by the Dashnaktsutyun members at the patriarchate. This project was based on the 1895 British, French, and Russian Reform Proposal, Sultan Abdülhamid II's decree of October 20, 1895, concerning reforms in the eastern provinces, the Vilayet Law of 1880 for Rumelia, and the Ottoman Vilayet Law of 1913.

Mandelstam's project had nine major points. First, the six Ottoman vilayets in eastern Anatolia would be united as one province and would be placed under a Christian Ottoman or preferably a European governorgeneral nominated by the sultan for a period of five years. Second, the governor-general's nomination had to be approved by the Great Powers. Third, the governor-general would have the power to appoint and dismiss all officials in the province. Fourth, he also would appoint all judges within his jurisdiction. Fifth, the governor-general would be assisted in his administration by an elected provincial assembly. Sixth, the assembly would be evenly split between Muslim and Christian representatives, elected for five years. Seventh, the provincial assembly would prepare legislation for the province, and the bills adopted by the assembly had to be sanctioned by the sultan before being enacted into law. Eighth, the tribal Kurdish Hamidiye cavalry regiments would be dissolved. Ninth, every ethnic group in the province (Turks, Armenians, and Kurds) would have the right to create educational institutions.

On July 1, 1913, grand vezir Said Halim Paşa presented an Ottoman counterproposal to the conference members, based on the reform project already in progress. Seemingly, the Porte's project, first designed during the grand vezirate of Mahmut Şevket Paşa, considered the lands falling under the eastern Anatolian reforms to include the province of Trabzon as well as the sanjak of Samsun. According to the Ottoman counterproposal, for the application of reforms in this area two general inspectors from neutral states would be assigned. Each of them would be responsible for one section. The general inspectors would be nominated by the sultan for five years.²⁷

Yet the Ottoman project was found unsatisfactory by the Russian government and was thus rejected, mainly because it did not envisage Russia's participation. Even though the British government considered this Ottoman proposal viable, it did not openly support it, perhaps in order to avoid jeopardizing its already restrained relations with Russia. When Russia fiercely opposed the Ottoman proposal, Grey abandoned his efforts. Nevertheless, to break up the stalemate the parties agreed to

submit their disaccord to an international commission that would hold a new conference at the summer residence of the Austrian ambassador in Yeniköy. The main points of the Ottoman project were as follows. The six eastern Ottoman provinces would be united in two administrative sections and would be placed under the control of foreign inspectorsgeneral who would be assisted in their work by some Ottoman and European officials as advisors. The inspectors-general, after deliberating with the Ottoman governors (valis), would propose reforms to the Porte. A general council would be formed to administer local affairs. The provincial judiciary had to be reorganized according to the needs of the region. The inspectors-general would advise the Ottoman government on the exploitation of the natural resources of the region. A special gendarmerie would be organized under the control of the French general Baumann Paşa to provide security.

Meanwhile the Ottoman ambassador in St. Petersburg, Turhan Paşa, sent a letter to Said Halim Paşa with a summary of his conversation with the Russian foreign minister, Sergei Sazonov. In his telegram to the grand vezir dated June 26, 1913, Turhan Paşa wrote that he had conducted a long interview with Sazonov, who considered the reform initiatives of the Ottoman government insufficient. According to Turhan Paşa, Sazonov protested against the continuous Kurdish depredations on the Armenians and the forceful seizure of the lands belonging to them by the Kurds. Despite the reform initiatives by the Porte, he complained that Kurds in the six vilayets continued to intimidate the Armenian peasants to appropriate their lands. Kurdish tribesmen did not hesitate even to murder Armenians on a daily basis in order to occupy their land unlawfully. Yet only a week earlier, in a previous meeting with Turhan Paşa, Sazonov had used a totally different and milder language toward the Porte and had told the Ottoman ambassador that the Russian government was happy because of the Ottoman reform initiatives. Nevertheless, in the same meeting the Russian foreign minister had also expressed his desire to see the Porte grant a railway concession in eastern Anatolia to Russia.²⁸

After the submission of the Ottoman plan the representatives of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy (the Triple Alliance) recommended taking it as a basis for the negotiations. The Triple Entente (Britain, France, and Russia), however, wanted to accept the Russian project as a basis for further negotiations. On July 23, 1913, a new proposal was submitted by the diplomats of the Triple Alliance to reconcile the Ottoman and Russian positions. This proposal emphasized the necessity of European supervision for the efficiency of the reforms, dissolution of the tribal

Kurdish Hamidiye cavalry regiments, and the establishment of schools conducted in all three regional languages. According to Wangenheim, the German ambassador at the Porte, the Russian project would actually prepare the ground for or even initiate the partition of the Ottoman Empire. Germany also argued that the Russian plan had gone far beyond the scope of the 1895 project of the Triple Entente. Britain and France agreed with Germany and asserted that the creation of one single province out of the six Ottoman vilayets and the appointment of a Christian governor were not mentioned in the 1895 reform project and were new additions. Germany, Britain, and France feared that Mandelstam's plan would cause the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire, which they were not ready for yet.²⁹

Understandably and expectedly Mandelstam's project was also not well received by the Porte. According to Said Halim Paşa this plan was designed to enable Russia to intervene in the internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire. The Porte seriously believed that Russia's intention was to establish its hegemony in the region. The Armenian issue, the grand vezir declared, was after all an internal problem for the Ottoman Empire, so the solution must come from the Ottoman government. In a telegram sent to Tevfik Paşa, the Ottoman ambassador in London, on June 17, 1913, Said Halim Paşa emphasized the detrimental effects of a foreign intervention in the internal affairs of the empire by using the Armenian reforms as a pretext. He particularly accused Russia and pointed out its increasingly threatening attitude. Russia, he said, was massing its military forces on the Ottoman border in order to exert pressure on the Porte. The grand vezir said that such interventions would weaken Ottoman authority in the region and as a result would undermine the efficiency of the reforms. The Armenians, according to Said Halim, were actively working to obtain European intervention in the reform issue, based on information received from the Ottoman ambassador in Paris, Rıfat Paşa. Moreover, Said Halim Paşa urged Tevfik Paşa to secure the appointment of British officials to assist the Ottoman reform efforts in eastern Anatolia. The grand vezir sincerely believed that British involvement in the reform issue would prevent Russian intervention.³⁰

The Great Powers, in particular Russia, were making the situation worse, said Said Halim, by constantly interfering in Ottoman internal affairs and obstructing their reform efforts.³¹ Michael De Giers, the Russian ambassador at the Porte, dismissed these objections and said that "if this grand vezir will not comply with our demands another grand vezir will."³²

The Yeniköy Conference, which lasted from July 3 to 24, 1913, introduced two new proposals for discussion. A Russian project would unite the six eastern provinces under one governor to create an "Armenian province." An Ottoman plan would apply to an even larger area, including the province of Trabzon and the sanjak of Samsun, to be placed under the supervision of two European inspectors-general.³³ "During the deliberations that ensued, the German and Austrian diplomats, joined later by the Italian delegate, opposed the Russian proposals and supported the Porte."34 The diplomats of the Central Powers considered the Russian project to be in reality a plan to partition Asiatic Turkey and accordingly rejected it. In fact the real concern of the Triple Alliance was not the preservation of the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire as its representatives claimed but securing their future zones of influence in Anatolia against a possible Russian encroachment.³⁵ Thus the German government succeeded in obtaining a guarantee from Said Halim Paşa that the Porte would not make any decision without consulting Berlin.³⁶ Moreover, while the Yeniköy Conference was taking place, German foreign minister Jagow and his Italian colleague Marci di San Giuliano were negotiating their respective zones of influence in the Asiatic provinces of the Ottoman Empire during a visit by the royal family of Italy to Kaiser Wilhelm II (r. 1888–1918) in Kiel. According to Jagow, Germany's share in this partition would consist of the territories extending from Alanya in the west to Acra or Lattaqia (Lazkiye), including Cilicia and the plain of Konya in the east, which would eventually be reached by the Baghdad railway. Accordingly, Italy would thus acquire the Antalya region, which lay to the west of Alanya.³⁷ Simultaneously, German territorial claims in Anatolia as well as Mesopotamia immediately aroused British hostility, because London considered any German presence in the Near East much more threatening to its interests than Russian expansion.³⁸

The French government, however, was very much against the partition of Anatolia into different spheres of influence among the European powers. France feared that this could undermine Ottoman authority and prepare the ground for the empire's eventual collapse. French industrial and mining investments were quite important in Anatolia at the time, which led France to defend the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire. Under these circumstances the Yeniköy Conference ended on July 23 without reaching any important decisions, except to safeguard the economic and strategic interests of the competing European powers. Despite the continuous advice of its allies (Britain and France) to adopt a more conciliatory and compromising policy toward the Porte, the

Russian government unfortunately continued to pursue an uncompromising policy in the Armenian reform issue. St. Petersburg had aspirations toward Asia Minor and persisted in addressing the "Armenian Question," which meant assuring the safety of the Armenian population in eastern Anatolia against the despoiling of the Kurds and Circassians.³⁹ According to the British and French an uncompromising and aggressive Russian policy toward the Porte would push the Ottoman government further toward Germany, which would jeopardize the interests of the Triple Entente in the region.

Meanwhile some other crucial developments were unfolding in the Balkans. The Second Balkan War was erupting there, this time among the victors over the spoils of the First Balkan War. Bulgaria was attacked by a coalition of Greece, Serbia, and Romania, its former allies. Utterly defeated, Sofia sued for peace. Grasping that golden opportunity, Ottomans also took action and retook the city of Edirne from the Bulgarians on July 20, 1913. The recapture of Eastern Thrace and Edirne by the Ottomans, however, provoked a hostile reaction from the Great Powers, which exhorted the Porte to return the city to Bulgaria and to withdraw to the Midye-Enez line. Nevertheless, the cabinet of Said Halim Paşa successfully withstood the intense diplomatic pressure exerted by the European governments and defied their threats of military intervention.

Despite appearances the powers were not united in their policy concerning the Ottoman Empire. Only Russia and Austria-Hungary advocated the use of coercive measures, including military action. The Russian proposal for a joint naval demonstration was opposed by Germany and failed to win the favor of England and France. The firm determination of the Ottoman government to keep Edirne bore fruit, and in late July the German government announced that it would not exert any pressure on the Porte on the matter.

During the time of the Yeniköy Conference representatives of the Young Turks and Armenians had also engaged in parallel talks with each other in order to reach an agreement on the Armenian Question. The Unionists met with the Dashnaks in Büyük Ada and began a series of negotiations. Cemal Paşa asked the Armenians to understand the difficult situation of the empire and be more cooperative with the Porte. A meeting was held at Bedros Hallacyan's house, attended by Talat Bey, Halil Menteşe, Mithat Şükrü Bleda, Khachatur Malumian (Agnuni), Vartkes Serengulian, Karekin Pastermajian, and Vahan Papazyan (Papazian). The two parties tried hard to reach a compromise. In one of these meetings Talat Bey said to the Armenian leaders: "The Russian project is a trap.

Don't fall into it. We also should not fall into it. Russia would never accept the creation of an independent Armenia on its Mediterranean way. Don't rely on Russia. Leave her. Come and let's do these reforms together without Russia."

Talat Bey's plea went unheeded. Armenian leaders, with the exception of Zohrab, did not want to listen. Nothing came out of these meetings in the end: the two sides failed to reach a compromise. Rober Koptaş attributes this failure to a lack of mutual trust. The Armenians accused the Unionists of not keeping their promises in the past, and the Unionists accused the Armenian side of being utopian and unrealistic. Actually Talat Paşa's warning to the Armenian leaders was very reminiscent of the words of Boghos Nubar Paşa. During his meeting with Rıfat Paşa, the Ottoman ambassador in London, on December 16, 1912, Boghos Nubar said: "Russia would never want an independent Armenia, because this would result in erecting a wall on its way to the İskenderun Bay (on the Mediterranean), exactly like what happened thirty-five years ago when the newly created Bulgarian state blocked the Russian expansion toward Istanbul and the Straits."

Later in December 1913 Halil Bey (Menteşe) visited Zohrab's house in the Ayaspaşa district, telling him that he had come to make a final offer to the Armenians. The government would accept all the Armenian demands concerning the reform program with one condition: the Armenians would have to announce that they no longer needed foreign (European) intervention. Zohrab replied to Halil that what the Armenian side wanted was not intervention but the guarantee of the Great Powers, so the Porte did not need to worry. In the end the two men reached an agreement: the Porte would appoint an inspector-general after consulting the Great Powers and getting their consent on this issue. According to Halil Bey, this was the ultimate concession that the CUP could make.⁴³

The next day the leaders of the Armenian community gathered in Zohrab's house to discuss the CUP's offer. Zaven der Yeghiaian (the Armenian patriarch), İsdepan Karayan, Hamparsum Boyaciyan, Karekin Pastermajian, and Vahan Papazyan (Papazian) were present at the meeting. Zohrab explained to them the details of the agreement that he had reached with Halil Bey. Later he wrote in his diary that all Armenian leaders present at that meeting rejected the agreement and dismissed Zohrab's ideas on this matter. "I did not insist," he said, "but felt a great pain because now the whole [Armenian nation] would suffer from the consequences" of this intransigent policy.⁴⁴

Within a month, on September 22, 1913, Baron Hans von Wangenheim, the German ambassador to Istanbul, and Michael De Giers, the Russian ambassador, came to an agreement upon a six-point plan formulated as pledges of the Ottoman government. According to its terms, the Ottoman government would ask the powers to recommend two inspectors-general, one for the northern part of the six vilayets of Erzurum, Trabzon, and Sivas and the other for the southern portion covering Van, Bitlis, Harput, and Diyarbakır (article 1). The Porte would sign a five-year contract with each of these inspectors and would also appoint high officials and judges if and when inspectors requested such nominations (article 2). An elected council composed of an equal number of Muslim and Christian representatives would also be formed (article 3). The whole process would take place under the supervision of the Great Powers' ambassadors (article 6).⁴⁵

According to the reports presented by the Russian ambassador to his British colleague at the Porte, Said Halim Paşa promised that he would not object to most of these articles provided that the German and Russian ambassadors approved the new plan. ⁴⁶ The proposal to nominate two inspectors-general, who would be recommended by the Great Powers and were to be vested with extraordinary powers, was quite acceptable to the grand vezir. Nor did he oppose the formation of mixed assemblies and the equal repartition of public offices between Muslims and Christians. What Said Halim refused to accept, however, was that the plan be placed under the supervision of the ambassadors. ⁴⁷

Notwithstanding his acquiescence, Said Halim changed his position radically soon after this conference and categorically rejected the project. According to the French ambassador at the Porte, Maurice Bompard, Said Halim had nervously told him that the Great Powers wanted to create autonomous provinces like Lebanon everywhere in the Ottoman Empire, which would be beyond the control of the Ottoman government. This would enable foreign powers to intervene in the internal affairs of the empire. Said Halim affirmed that "what was possible in some measure on an isolated mountain, without any administration or strategic importance, could not be repeated in the vilayets, which are the bulwarks of the empire in the east." He was concerned for his empire and angrily asserted that the Great Powers did not wish the Ottoman government to play any role in contemplated reforms of its own provinces: "It is not in this way that we will obtain peace in Armenia. They would not act differently if they wanted to cause trouble and anarchy. I refuse to have anything to do with this. If one day they succeed in realizing their designs it will be with another grand vezir."48

In a sense Said Halim's determined stance against the Russo-German plan, which in his eyes posed a threat to Ottoman sovereignty in eastern Anatolia, appeared to bear fruit. According to the British ambassador in Istanbul, Sir Louis Mallet, Russian ambassador De Giers was forced to yield to the persistent attitude of the grand vezir and to accept that the inspectors should be Ottoman subjects assisted by foreign advisors, as demanded in a note communicated by the Porte to the Russian embassy on November 7, 1913. Britain backed the Russo-German standpoint on this issue. Mallet put pressure on Said Halim by asking him to accept the Russo-German plan for Armenia in an interview on November 11, 1913. In his response to the British ambassador the grand vezir affirmed that "the Porte would never accept such an Inspectorate-General as was formulated in the two ambassadors' project" but that "he hoped to reach an agreement with Monsieur De Giers, to whom he had proposed the appointment of foreign advisers instead of foreign inspectors-general." "

Said Halim conceded two points in an effort to reach a compromise with the powers. First, the Ottoman government agreed to welcome foreign advisors recommended by the Great Powers; second, the Porte consented to accept the opinion of the advisors in case of disputes. ⁵⁰ Actually, Mallet was sympathetic to the Turks, unlike his predecessor, Gerard Lowther. Louis Mallet openly declared that "he preferred not to accept the anti-CUP lines formerly adopted by the Embassy." According to Heller, Mallet's policy was "demonstrated by his attitude towards the Armenian question, which differed sharply from that of his predecessor." ⁵¹

After a short period De Giers rejected these counterproposals and insisted on the imposition of the six original points that had been agreed upon in the earlier Russo-German plan. The imperialist powers had already decided not to extend the life of the Ottoman Empire and to divide up its territory among themselves, thus settling the Eastern Question to their advantage. Meanwhile, on the domestic front, the anger of many Muslims within the empire (especially those who lived in urban areas) was clear in the harsh tone of fiery articles appearing in the Unionist press, especially in Tanin and Jeune Turc. Urbanized Muslims were particularly receptive to these appeals in the wake of the traumatic experiences of Muslim refugees from the Balkan Wars. In fact the resolute stand of the Porte, which was supported by Muslim public opinion, forced Great Power diplomats to step back and soften their original positions. On November 25, 1913, after discussions with Said Halim, the German and Russian ambassadors drew up yet another plan, in which the powers renounced their control over the application of reforms. It was further conceded that the inspectors-general did not need to be of European

extraction, as had originally been decided. Nevertheless, the accommodation made by the powers was effectively obviated, because German and Russian planners had already agreed that the foreign advisors would be invested with more authority than the Ottoman inspectors-general.⁵²

In order to thwart this maneuver Said Halim Paşa declared to Mallet that "the Turkish Government could not allow the right of the Powers to send them advisers, who would interfere in their internal administration and be in constant communication with the foreign Ambassador. It was wounding to their dignity and would not work in practice." ⁵³

The Russian diplomatic pressure on the Ottoman Empire was partially thwarted by the German diplomatic support for the Porte. Eventually the diplomatic game between the powers produced the February 8, 1914, agreement on the reform project for the empire's eastern provinces. Said Halim Paşa and Konstantin Gulkevich, the chargé d'affaires of the Russian embassy in Istanbul, were the signatories to the treaty.

According to the terms of the treaty two foreign inspectors-general would be appointed to govern the six provinces of eastern Anatolia (article 1); these inspectors-general would supervise the civil and justice administrations with the security forces at their disposal (article 2); the inspectors could judge all officials whom they supervised inefficient if need be (article 3). Laws, decrees, and public announcements would be issued in the local languages for every sector; court decisions would be written in Turkish but could be translated to other local languages if one of the parties required it (article 7). Local residents would perform their military services in their region; the government could nonetheless send a limited number of local recruits to remote provinces like Yemen and the Hijaz in Arabia (article 9). The Hamidiye regiments would be dissolved into the Reserve Cavalry Forces (article 10). The Porte further pledged to organize a census in the shortest time possible (article 11).⁵⁴

AN AGREEMENT REACHED

The February 8, 1914, agreement between Istanbul and St. Petersburg on the Armenian issue can be seen as a minor victory for the tsarist government. It appeared officially to sanction the Russian sphere of influence in eastern Anatolia by securing for Russia a legal ground for further interference in the internal affairs of the Ottomans and an eventual occupation of these provinces. Interestingly, Roderic Davison has argued the contrary and believes that the agreement did not endanger the interests of the Great Powers in eastern Anatolia while they maintained Ottoman

sovereignty.⁵⁵ The acceptance of the treaty by the Great Powers attested to their recognition of Russian influence in the region in exchange for the establishment of their own spheres of influence in other provinces of the Ottoman Empire. After the signing of the February 8, 1914, Ottoman-Russian agreement, the Armenian Question in eastern Anatolia ceased to be an international issue as defined in the 1878 Treaty of Berlin and reverted to being an issue between Russia and the Ottoman Empire as determined in the Treaty of San Stefano, dictated to the Porte by a victorious Russia at the end of the 1877–78 Russo-Ottoman War.

Following the signing of the agreement and after some negotiations, a list of five candidates was presented to the Ottoman government: two Dutch nominees, two Belgians, and one Norwegian. On April 2, 1914, the Porte chose two inspectors-general out of this list. One of them was the Dutchman Louis Westenenk, who was a colonial official in the Dutch Indies, and the other was a Norwegian, Nicolas Hoff, who was the secretary of the Norwegian Ministry of War appointed to implement the reform program. Hoff was originally recommended by the French government.⁵⁶

Of these two inspectors, only the Norwegian was able to reach his area of jurisdiction. On July 9, 1914, he left Istanbul for Trabzon and arrived in Erzurum on August 4, 1914. In the meantime World War I had started. The Ottoman government asked Hoff either to remain in Erzurum or to return to Istanbul, because it considered the implementation of the reforms impossible under the new circumstances. Hoff refused to return to Istanbul and continued his journey, reaching Van via Bitlis on August 17, 1914. Due to pressure from the governor of Van, Tahsin Bey, Hoff was compelled to leave Van in early September 1914 and returned to Istanbul after a long journey through Diyarbakır, Urfa, Aleppo, Beirut, and İzmir. The other inspector-general never left the Ottoman capital, mostly due to bureaucratic activities.⁵⁷

The Armenian patriarch of the time, Zaven der Yeghiaian (1868–1947), wrote in his memoirs that as soon as the agreement for Armenian reforms was signed he sent a telegram to express his gratitude to the Russian ambassador, Michael De Giers. Patriarch Zaven said that De Giers had worked very hard for the reform project. The Russian ambassador visited the Armenian Patriarchate on February 23, 1914, to return the patriarch's compliments. The patriarch could not receive the Russian envoy that day because of his priestly duties, but three days later the Armenian returned the visit. The Russian ambassador urged the patriarch to send emissaries to Europe in order to meet with the inspectors-general

and win them over to the Armenian cause. Zaven did exactly what De Giers recommended. As recorded in his memoirs, two Armenian envoys, Harutyun Mosdician and Hagop Zavriev, soon arrived in Europe to fulfill their assigned task. ⁵⁸ The conclusion of this agreement with Russia thus created a positive atmosphere. St. Petersburg succeeded in establishing an autonomous Armenia in eastern Anatolia under its control and using it as a stepping stone to Mesopotamia and the Persian Gulf as well as a base for exerting pressure on Turkey's eastern flank.

CONCLUSION

The signing of the Ottoman-Russian agreement on the Armenian issue could be seen as an important background to the choices of the Armenian elites during World War I as well as the subsequent Ottoman reactions vis-à-vis Armenian ambitions. In this sense the signing of the Armenian reforms had an immediate effect, because the reform prospects suddenly alarmed the Kurds in the region. Kurdish aghas in eastern Anatolia understandably feared the consequences of such a reform project. For the Kurds the agreement meant the establishment of Armenian supremacy over them, under a Russian protectorate. Kurdish tribal leaders could be uneducated, but they were intelligent and could very well see the danger. They accused the Ottoman government of preferring the Armenians to them and surrendering the region to Russia. The first reaction came from Bitlis. In early March 1914 Molla Selim, a Kurdish tribal leader, staged a revolt there. The Ottoman government reacted fast to the rebellion and sent troops to suppress it. In the meanwhile the government also distributed arms to the Bitlis Armenians to defend themselves against the Kurdish rebels. In early April, one month after its outbreak, the Kurdish rebellion in Bitlis was crushed. Molla Selim and some of his armed men took refuge in the Russian consulate in Bitlis.⁵⁹

After the January 1915 Sarıkamış disaster the Ottoman government felt vulnerable along the eastern front, where a sizable Armenian population lived. Since the beginning of the war the Porte had been receiving information about the Armenians openly collaborating with the invading Russian troops. On May 26, 1915, Talat Bey, minister of the interior, submitted a bill to the cabinet asking for the adoption of a special law regarding the deportation of the Armenian populations living in areas adjacent to the war zones, mainly in the eastern and southeastern provinces of the empire. On the surface the purpose of this bill was to prevent Armenians from collaborating with enemy forces, especially with

the Russians. Indeed the Armenians living in the eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire had cast their lot with Russia. As demonstrated in the well-researched study of Sean McMeekin, who investigated the Russian Archives, A. A. Adamov, the Russian consul at Erzurum, wrote in his report of November 1, 1914, that "it is not only the Armenian population of Erzurum, but also in all cities surrounding it, including Erzincan, Mana Hatun (*sic*) and Kayseri not to mention in the villages and rural areas, who were awaiting with impatience the arrival of the Russian troops who will free them from the Turkish yoke." ⁶⁰

The same information was also provided by Yusuf Hikmet Bayur in his famous *Turk İnkılabı Tarihi*, where he quotes a report sent by the Russian consul of Bitlis on January 6, 1913, to the Russian ambassador in Istanbul:

Because of the recent Ottoman defeats in the Balkan Wars the animosity between Muslims and Christians [Armenians] in the province reached an alarming level. The news of the Slavic and Greek victories over Turkey gave serious hope to the Armenians for their independence. Armenians, who nurture feelings of vengeance against the Muslims, considered the defeat of the Turkish armies to be the providence of God. The hope of the Armenians and all Christians living in and around Bitlis is in Russia. 61

On June 27, 1915, Armenian Patriarch Zaven paid a visit to Said Halim Paşa in order to seek his intervention in stopping the deportation of his community. During his audience with the grand vezir, the Armenian patriarch bitterly lamented the deplorable situation of the Armenians who suffered the hardships and misery of deportation. He reported that the Armenian community faced total destruction if the deportations continued. His pleas went unheard. Even if Said Halim Paşa agreed on the deplorable condition of the empire's Armenians, he believed that this was caused primarily by the subversive action of the Armenians against the Porte and by the intervention of some Great Powers on their behalf, views that were not necessarily accurate. The Armenian patriarch, although accepting the existence of some isolated acts of rebellion, categorically refused to accept the accusation of a general Armenian rebellion against the Ottoman government. The grand vezir stated that entire battalions were being formed by Armenian subjects of the empire, ready to take up arms against the Ottoman government in cooperation with the enemy. Patriarch Zaven told him that more than a million people,

including women and children, had perished in the deportations and that he personally would prefer the massacres committed during the reign of Sultan Abdülhamid, where women and children were spared, to this situation. Said Halim Paşa replied that the Ottoman government had no intention of exterminating the entire Armenian community of the empire. But, he added, these measures were necessary in order to prevent Armenian rebels from collaborating with the enemy: "This is a simple *tedbir* [precautionary measure], not a *ceza* [punishment]." Said Halim told Patriarch Zaven that the government's decision on the deportation of the Armenians was irreversible, but it was also the government's duty to assist the people in their displacement.⁶²

The proposed bill was adopted by the government on May 30, 1915, and issued on June 1, 1915, as the Temporary Law of Deportation. Although Said Halim had endorsed the law as the head of the cabinet, he later affirmed during his interrogation by the Postwar Inquiry Commission that "he did not know that the deportations would lead to the massacres and insisted that the plight of the Armenians was caused by the misapplication of the deportation orders." Curiously, he also affirmed during the same hearings that "following the massacre of the Armenians, commissions were formed; these commissions carried out their duties well. Nevertheless, the Ministry of Interior prevented me from publicizing the results of the investigation despite my every insistence. Then it became evident that as long as Talat Pasha remained at the Ministry of Interior, nothing would come out of these investigations." 63

During his eventful political career, one of the most crucial challenges that Said Halim Paşa faced was Russia's meddling in the Armenian Question. In the end, with designs on eastern Anatolia, Russia took advantage of the fragile situation of the Ottoman Empire by inciting the Armenian population in the region to rebel against the Porte. Said Halim fought tenaciously against these Russian plans and thwarted St. Petersburg's schemes for Anatolia with skilled diplomacy. Moreover, he also opposed, though unsuccessfully, the draconian measures adopted by Talat Paşa to solve the Armenian Question in eastern Anatolia in April 1915. Unfortunately, Said Halim was not strong enough in the cabinet to prevent the empire being dragged into the war by the pro-German Enver Paşa. Said Halim's failures to prevent the empire from entering the war demonstrated the demise of the last multiethnic and multiconfessional Muslim empire. It also demonstrated the failure of pan-Islamism, an ideology that he advocated in the face of the rising ethnic nationalism in the Muslim world, which led to the disasters that followed, including the painful and cruel tragedy of the Armenian massacres.

NOTES

I would like to thank Ramazan Hakkı Öztan for his suggestions and comments.

- 1. For the Armenian constitutional system, see Vartan Artinian, *The Armenian Constitutional System in the Ottoman Empire*, 1839–1863.
- For the relations between Armenians and Kurds in the late Ottoman Empire, see S. E. Zarzecki, "La question kurdo-armenienne." See also Tessa Hofmann and Gerayer Koutcharian, "The History of Armenian Kurdish Relations in the Ottoman Empire."
- 3. Esat Uras, The Armenians in History and the Armenian Question, 441–42.
- 4. Cited in Edmund Ollier, Cassell's Illustrated History of the Russo-Turkish War, 107.
- 5. Harry N. Howard, *The Partition of Turkey*; Gabriel Noradoungian, *Recueil d'actes internationaux de l'Empire Ottoman*, 509-21 (quotations cited in both).
- For the Armenian Revolutionary Movement, see Louise Nalbandian, The Armenian Revolutionary Movement. Also see Garabet K. Moumdjian, "From Millet-i Sadıka to Millet-i Asiya."
- Salahi R. Sonyel, The Ottoman Armenians, 109–15. On the Armenian Question, see also M. Hakan Yavuz, "The Transformation of 'Empire' through Wars and Reforms."
- 8. For an examination of relations between tsarist Russia and the Armenians, see Michael Pavlovitch, "La Russie et les Arméniens."
- 9. See Noradoungian, Recueil.
- 10. Abdülhamid'in Hatıra Defteri, 59.
- Edgar Granville, "Le tsarisme en Asie-Mineure," 12–13; see also Ercument Kuran,
 "Osmanli–Rus Iliskileri cercevesinde Ermeni Sorunu"; H. Pasdermadjian, *Histoire de l'Arménie* (Paris: H. Samuelian, 1964), 381–83.
- 12. Gaidz F. Minassian, "Les relations entre le Comité Union et Progrès et la Fédération Revolutionaire Arménienne." See also Dikran M. Kaligian, *Armenian Organization and Ideology under Ottoman Rule, 1908–1914.*
- "All humanity salutes the wonderful action of the Young Turks." Minassian "Les relations entre le Comité Union et Progrès et la Fédération Revolutionaire Arménienne," 47.
- 14. Ibid., 49.
- 15. Ibid., 50.
- 16. Yusuf Hikmet Bayur, Türk İnkılabı Tarihi, 2:22-24.
- 17. Rober Koptaş, "Zohrab, Papazyan ve Pastırmacıyan'ın Kaleminden," 178, 179.
- 18. Ibid., 183.
- 19. Bayur, Türk İnkılabı Tarihi, 2:22.
- 20. "The British Government, which initially agreed with the Ottoman request, changed its attitude at the last moment due to the Russian diplomatic pressure and demarches in London to the effect that the project couldn't be realized." Said Halim Paşa, L'Empire Ottoman et la Guerre Mondiale, 6.
- 21. Theresa Holtschlag, "The Proposed Armenian Reforms of 1913–1914," 12–15.
- 22. Joseph Heller, "Britain and the Armenian Question, 1912–1914," 3–26.
- 23. Holtschlag, "The Proposed Armenian Reforms," 15.
- Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi/Prime Ministry Ottoman Archive in Istanbul (hereafter BOA), HRSYS, 1866.

- 25. Holtschlag, "The Proposed Armenian Reforms," 15, 38.
- 26. Ibid., 35.
- 27. Bayur, Türk İnkılabı Tarihi, vol. 2, part 3, 119.
- 28. BOA, HRSYS.1866.
- 29. Holtschlag, "The Proposed Armenian Reforms," 47, 48, 56.
- 30. BOA, HRSYS.1866.
- 31. Ahmet Şeyhun, Said Halim Pasha, 93.
- 32. Andre Mandelstam, *Le sort de l'empire ottoman*; 228 (my translation); Bayur, *Türk İnkılabı Tarihi*, 2:125–30.
- 33. Şeyhun, Said Halim Pasha, 91.
- 34. Bayur, Türk İnkılabı Tarihi, 2:126.
- Howard, The Partition of Turkey, 52-54. See also Bayur, Türk İnkılabı Tarihi, 2:126-27.
- 36. Holtschlag, "The Proposed Armenian Reforms," 49.
- 37. Şeyhun, Said Halim Pasha, 92.
- 38. Bayur, Türk İnkılabı Tarihi, vol. 2, part 3, 139.
- 39. Ibid.
- 40. Halil Menteşe, Osmanlı Mebusan Meclisi Reisi Halil Mentese'nin Anıları, 175.
- 41. Koptaş, "Zohrab, Papazyan ve Pastırmacıyan'ın Kaleminden," 185.
- 42. Bayur, Türk İnkılabı Tarihi Inkilabı, 24.
- 43. Koptaş, "Zohrab, Papazyan ve Pastırmacıyan'ın Kaleminden," 187.
- 44. Ibid.
- 45. Mandelstam, *Le sort de l'empire ottoman*, 234–35; Bayur, *Türk İnkılabı Tarihi*, vol. 2, part 3, 145–46.
- Bayur, Türk İnkılabı Tarihi, vol. 2, part 3, 148; British Documents, vol. 10, part 1, no. 581.
- 47. Bayur, Türk İnkılabı Tarihi, 2:148; British Documents, vol. 10, part 1, no. 581
- 48. Documents diplomatiques, vol. 8, no. 296 (my translation).
- 49. British Documents, vol. 10, part 1, no. 581, no. 582.
- 50. Ibid., no. 584.
- 51. Heller, "Britain and the Armenian Question," 15.
- 52. British Documents, vol. 10, part 1, no. 581, no. 584.
- 53. Ibid., no. 584.
- 54. Ibid.
- 55. Roderic H. Davison, "The Armenian Crisis, 1912–1914," 504.
- 56. Holtschlag, "The Proposed Armenian Reforms," 96.
- 57. Zekeriya Türkmen, *Vilayat-ı Şarkiye*, 77–82.
- 58. Zaven Der Yeghiayan, My Patriarchal Memoirs, 28–29.
- 59. Bayur, Türk İnkılabı Tarihi, 2:187–90.
- 60. Sean McMeekin, The Russian Origins of the First World War, 164.
- 61. Bayur, Türk İnkılabı Tarihi, 2:26-29.
- 62. Şeyhun, Said Halim Pasha, 112.
- 63. Harp Kabinelerinin Isticvabi, 293. Şeyhun, Said Halim Pasha, 113. Talat Paşa's explanations for the deportations and massacres of the Armenians are in his memoirs, "Posthumous Memoirs of Talaat Pasha."

The Bitlis Uprising before World War I

Tibet Abak

The Kurdish Question has been one of the main issues of contention in the Middle East from the nineteenth century onward. In the particular historical setting of the Ottoman Empire the Kurdish Question is part of an intertwined context of both regional and international elements, which includes the Armenian Question, Ottoman state centralization, the hegemony of aghas and sheikhs, and patterns of foreign intervention. Thus the Kurdish Question provides a multifaceted microcosm that reflects greater variations in different periods and regions and under varying circumstances. From one perspective the Kurdish Question may be viewed as a conflict between the local Kurdish chieftains and the Ottoman central government; from another it may be presented as a form of intercommunal conflict between the Kurds and Armenians.

Understandably, the complexity of the topic makes it difficult to combine all these variations in a single study. The existing literature reflects this difficulty. The Kurdish Question has often been tackled from singular perspectives, thus emphasizing foreign intervention, the land question between the Kurds and Armenians, or Kurdish nationalism. While available scholarship needs to be challenged for this singularity, contemporary stereotypes about Kurds and daily political concerns also present further difficulties, all amounting to a set of anachronisms. In various works on Kurdish history the issue has been considered from the vantage point of the present, contributing to an ahistorical artificial past, with the concerns of today overriding the analysis. The common purpose of these anachronistic works is to provide a historical and ideological infrastructure for a certain political view. And it matters little whether these works were written by members of the Turkish or Kurdish nationalist camps. Some authors, for instance, keep asserting that Kurds are of Turkish descent—a view no longer seen as valid. Others reduce Kurdish problems to the instigations of the Great Powers.¹

Other accounts opted for creating "legends" in Kurdish history and framed every instance of rebellion with reference to the image of Kurds as an "oppressed people." The following long quotation from Hamit Bozarslan, who is considered to be one of the major specialists on the Kurdish Question, illustrates a subjective take on history and the nationalist instrumentalization of the past:

History penetrates into almost all fields of life. Because it is considered the key for the absolute existence of the Kurdish community, history functions as a common ground for intellectual production. Technically history is an instrument in creating a narrative of superiority by understanding the victories and defeats as well as highlighting moments of pride and tragedies in the past. At the same time it is an endless source to legitimize the Kurdish nationalist claims as a cultural, ideological, and political expression. By thus giving meaning to Kurdishness, it shows us how to eliminate obstacles that lie ahead of erecting the Kurdish nation, particularly by achieving a higher degree of political and military mobilization or through greater inner devotion and solidarity.³

Similarly, Abbas Vali argued: "I have not been utilizing history to analyze the essence of the past or to recover the so-called continuity that lies at the heart of the foundation and development of Kurdish national origins. Instead I have been using it to reveal the beginnings of Kurdish nationalism and also to unmask this nationalism by showing that it has emerged in opposition to other nationalisms." History is thus reduced to the legitimation of Kurdish nationalist claims, so Vali's statement is also a clear way of misrepresenting history. In this sense one of the vexing issues is that researchers working on the Kurdish situation within the Ottoman imperial framework usually do not sufficiently consider the Ottoman political and socioeconomic structures before offering their interpretation of events. These researchers who make the essentialist claim that the "Kurdish nation" has long existed categorize the Kurds as a monolithic people who have struggled to escape from the Ottoman and Persian sovereignties, thus framing every single rebellion that featured Kurdish participation in the nationalist vocabulary.

Avoiding this nationalist vocabulary, this chapter accordingly examines the Bitlis uprising in 1914 as an attempt to shed some light on the origins of the Kurdish Question in the Ottoman Empire. The Bitlis uprising of 1914 was the last significant political movement of the Kurdish

opposition within the Ottoman political structure, thus representing an important historical phase in Kurdish political life. By utilizing the contemporary Russian consulate reports from Bitlis, this study analyzes the Kurdish political structure in the Ottoman Empire after the turn of the twentieth century. Using such Russian archival documentation also helps us understand the position of Russia in the Bitlis uprising as an important actor that had cultivated an interest in the Kurdish affairs, with a proven record of interventionist policies toward the eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire.

TURKEY AND THE GREAT POWERS AFTER THE TREATY OF BERLIN

International Competition

In general terms the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries marked an important period for the political system of Europe in which the Great Power rivalry over colonial possessions worsened to a great extent. The leading countries in this struggle were undoubtedly Britain and France. Having gained their national unity in the second part of the nineteenth century, Germany and Italy lagged behind. Only later did they begin to acquire colonial territories and expand their spheres of influence. Russia followed similar imperial policies, particularly striving to establish its control over the Ottoman and Persian lands. The expansionist policies of Russia targeted three spheres for expansion during the nineteenth century: first toward the west; second, toward Siberia and the Far East; and finally toward the south, including both the Ottoman Empire and Qajar Iran. These spheres for expansion paralleled the imperial strategies of Russia developed by Peter the Great.⁵ The Russian policies in regard to the south, however, still constituted the main axis of Russian foreign policy,6 as illustrated by the sustained and steady Russian presence in the south and Russian plans for the Straits. Every strategy of expansion undoubtedly required ideological consent on the level of the masses. In this aspect the Armenians became the most significant component of this process in the Middle Eastern policy of Russia.8 Having established close relations with the Armenians after the capture of Yerevan and its vicinity in 1804, Petersburg utilized the Armenians both in military terms and as a tool to intervene in the domestic affairs of the Ottomans by declaring itself the protector of the Armenians.9 Holding Iran under its absolute control, Petersburg articulated plans to march into the Ottoman territories from the Caucasus when conditions became ripe. This strategy

undoubtedly increased the importance of the Armenians who lived in close proximity to the Caucasian border, who would be used as military units in such a probable annexation of the region. Petersburg similarly made such contingency plans for the Kurdish tribes, which constituted another major sector of the population in the eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire. Accordingly, Russia attempted to establish close relationships with the chiefs of these tribes, particularly from the second part of the nineteenth century onward.¹⁰

The outbreak of World War I was rooted in such international power struggles, particularly in the heated struggle over the Ottoman territories. 11 Having stopped pursuing the policy of the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire after the Treaty of Berlin in 1878, Britain joined the relentless pursuit after its own share of the Ottoman territories. Russia, by virtue of its geographical proximity and previous wars with the Ottomans, considered itself closer to the goal and already quite invested in the fate of Ottoman territories. Germany, having failed to secure colonies overseas, thus missed the chance to find markets for its rapidly developing industries and also began seriously to consider the significance of the Ottoman territories. 12 Instead of pursuing territorial ambitions, however, Germany opted for extending its sphere of influence in the political, economic, and military affairs of the region by allying itself with the Ottoman state. 13 Such alignments were important, because each of the Great Powers began to form strong policies concerning the eastern provinces of the empire. Geographically the eastern provinces were on the route to India, an important British colonial possession, and the natural resources in the region further attracted the interests of many countries. The policies schematically outlined here fall within the broader notion of the Eastern Question, which denotes the policies of the Great Powers on the question of the political and territorial future of the Ottoman Empire.¹⁴ This international perspective is a foundational component in understanding the events in the Ottoman Empire: it was within this context of international power politics that the local politics took their shape, as both the Armenians and some Kurdish tribal leaders tried to invite foreign intervention in the Ottoman affairs by staging rebellions. In this sense Britain and Russia were two particularly important actors that promised support for these Ottoman communities on the eastern flank.

Kurds in the International Arena

The Kurdish Question began to take shape already in the beginning of the nineteenth century. One of the main reasons for the growing unrest in eastern Anatolia was the attempt of the Porte to wrest away the power in the hands of the Kurdish emirates, which gradually began to emerge as little statelets across the region. 15 These emirates increased their control and emerged as large confederations over time as a result of a set of compromises with or forcible annexation of some low-ranking tribes, turning them into the main axis of centrifugal force across the region. Even though some specialists considered these emirates to be the embodiment of Kurdish proto-nationalism, they were actually just confederations that possessed centrifugal inclinations. 16 Tellingly, the members of these confederations had loyalty not to the mir (the head of the emirate or confederation) but rather to their own tribal chiefs, who were loyal to the mir. In other words, the loyalty of the tribal Kurds to the emirate was an indirect allegiance through being a member of the tribe. 17 Certainly the most important factors in the formation of these types of emirates and the basis of loyalty were the socioeconomic structure and the geographical conditions peculiar to the area. After the Ottoman conquest in 1514, the region proved to be a formidable challenge for the Ottoman administration to establish its central control, particularly because of the difficulty of transportation and governmental access to the area. Furthermore, the extant tribal structure did not favor such centralized control, so any attempt to alter this structure could lead the Kurds to shift sides in the Ottoman struggle with the Safavids. Accordingly, the power structures in the region changed very little. Traditional power magnates continued to exert their authority on the eastern flank of the Ottoman Empire. 18

Yet, from the nineteenth century onward, the transformation of these emirates into statelets turned out to be a source of instability across the region, with the changing attitudes of the Ottoman state toward the provincial power structures. Particularly from the reign of Mahmud II onward the Porte started to reform and modernize its classical imperial system of governance, which had clear consequences for the eastern provinces. Despite the struggles of the Kurdish emirates to preserve the status quo against these policies, the Porte managed to liquidate these power structures in the region.¹⁹ The liquidation of the Kurdish emirates in turn translated into the growing strength and influence of the Kurdish sheikhs in the eastern provinces of the empire.²⁰

By the end of the nineteenth century the influence of the Kurdish sheikhs thus reached new heights in the region with the absence of Kurdish powerful beys and leaders such as the Bedirhan family. The Kurdish sheikhs extended a layer of protection toward the broader Kurdish population and possessed a vast amount of property. This increase of influence

in the hands of the Kurdish sheikhs in the second part of the nineteenth century contributed to the growing religious fanaticism in some Kurdish tribes as well as the deteriorating of Kurdish-Armenian relations. Accordingly, from the second part of the nineteenth century onward, the Kurdish situation attracted the interest of the Western powers in conjunction with their growing interests in the Armenian issue. ²¹ The Western powers' distrust of the Kurds began to take shape through the activities of the notorious Kurdish sheikh Ubeydullah during the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–78, when the Kurdish troops that he commanded attacked and looted the Armenian villages and communities.²² As a result the intercommunal relations between the Kurds and Armenians began to worsen, and the reaction by the Armenian revolutionaries was soon to follow.²³ The mutinies of the Kurdish leader Ezdanshir and Sheikh Ubeydullah are only two of several instances that defined the lack of stability in this period. Yet neither these events nor the uprisings before the turn of the twentieth century embodied a nationalist character. Instead they were motivated by more local objectives of the regional powerholders.

THE MAIN REASONS FOR THE BITLIS UPRISING

The Bitlis uprising is an important episode in the broader Kurdish struggles during this period, clearly contributing to the development of the Kurdish movement by World War I. While the uprising provides insights into the dynamics of the Kurdish political struggle, it is important to bear in mind that the context of the uprising involves both domestic and international aspects.

Internal Reasons

The domestic political conditions that developed after the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 had profound effects on the Kurdish sectors of the Ottoman population,²⁴ just as they did on other communities across the empire.²⁵ First and foremost the postrevolutionary years sealed the doom of Hamidian censorship. As the Ottoman press progressed, several political or social issues regarding the future of the empire began to be discussed freely and openly. The Ottoman press often reported on the status and grievances of the Kurds. Some newspapers were published by the Kurds themselves, such as *Kürt Teavün ve Terakki Gazetesi* (Kurdish Newspaper for Cooperation and Progress).²⁶

But positive developments in the postrevolutionary years were not limited to the rapid development of printed media. For instance, the period also saw the burgeoning of political organizations. The most significant of these organizations were the Kurdish Society of Cooperation and Progress (established on September 19, 1908), the Society of Friends of Kurdistan (established in 1912), the Society for Spreading Education in Kurdistan (established in 1910), and the Kurdish Student Hope Society (established in 1912).²⁷ Moreover, the local political groups such as the Kurdish club in Bitlis wielded particular power and influence. Established in 1908, this club soon registered a lot of members.²⁸ Thus the proliferation of political organizations as well as the press in the Unionist years had a clear impact on Kurdish political consciousness.

The policies adopted by the Unionists also had an impact on the Kurds in the postrevolutionary era. Until this time the Kurds and Turks were almost on an equal footing in the empire. Both peoples served in the army and were typically involved in farming. Moreover, both of these peoples identified themselves first as Muslims and then as subjects of the Ottoman sultan. This identification characterized the loyalties of both the larger population and intellectuals. For instance, many Kurdish intellectuals such as Abdullah Cevdet and İshak Sükuti considered themselves to be Ottomans and accordingly took part in the Young Turk movement.²⁹ After 1908 the Young Turks started pursuing policies of centralization, however, and tried to form a new Ottoman bourgeoisie that would view itself as the new middle class of the Ottoman Empire and accordingly would embody sole loyalty to the Porte. Particularly applicable to western Anatolia, these policies tried to develop an Ottoman bourgeoisie with Turkish origins that would balance out the non-Muslimdominated bourgeoisie in the region, leading to a dramatic increase in the number of Turkish enterprises.³⁰ The Ottoman government was also active in propaganda efforts that promoted Ottomanism and centralization in all governmental establishments, such as schools, post offices, courts, municipalities, and others.³¹ Furthermore, Türk Ocağı (Turkish Hearth, the official nationalist society of the Young Turks) was very popular as a cultural and educational society and became a widespread ideological impetus for centralization all across the empire.³² While the journals and newspapers published by the Young Turks displayed new insights on Ottomanist centralization, their growing emphasis on unity came to create distrust and suspicion among the Kurdish tribes and some Kurdish intellectuals vis-à-vis the Ottoman government. Illustrative of this unease among the Kurds was the letter by Celadet Bedirhan to Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk), in which he expressed his attitude toward the Turkish Hearth: "as the Turkish nationalists developed these hearths for you, the Kurdish

nationalists developed them for us."³³ Even though the term "Turkish nationalism" referred to the centralization policies, these policies toward Ottoman unity were clearly perceived as attempts at "Turkification" by the intellectuals and masses who had centrifugal tendencies. Attitudes like Bedirhan's came to strengthen nationalistic sentiments among the Kurdish intellectuals. This very development prepared the ground for the Bitlis uprising.

We cannot fully grasp the nature of the tensions that brought about the uprising without considering the role played by the Armenian reforms.³⁴ The Kurds as members of the Muslim community were adamantly and constantly opposed to the Armenian reform attempts, which they perceived as dangerous for the current state of affairs in Kurdistan. They considered the support and protection extended by the Great Powers to the Armenians, as evident in diplomatic maneuvers and missionary work, to be a sign that the region was to be allocated to the Armenians in the near future.³⁵ This in particular is why the Kurdish tribal leaders, with influence in the region, as well as the sheikhs, with religious authority, cultivated antagonisms toward the Armenians. The most striking antagonists among the tribal leaders undoubtedly were those in the service of the state through the Hamidiye regiments. 36 Having been established during the reign of Abdülhamid II in 1891 as a measure against Russia and the activities of the Armenian revolutionaries,³⁷ the Hamidiye regiments gradually emerged as the center of local military/political authority just as the emirates had done earlier in the century.³⁸ As the Hamidiye regiments clashed with the Armenian revolutionaries and raided and plundered Armenian villages, often without being held legally responsible for the significant uneasiness that they caused, 39 the tribal leaders influential in the regiments were against the new regime, which they perceived as cultivating intentions to destroy their privileges. 40 After the declaration of the constitution in 1908 a number of disturbances reflected the level of public unease over the Armenian reforms all too well.⁴¹ Most of the Kurdish tribes accordingly demanded from Constantinople the dethronement of Abdülhamid II and the restoration of Shari^ca in all its aspects. 42 Yet the subsequent dethronement of Abdülhamid II provided the more immediate context for the Bitlis uprising: the Kurds came to consider the Young Turks and the new regime to be the opponents of and obstacles to Islam. 43 They believed that Abdülhamid II was associated with the image of the protector of Islam, a view that was particularly strengthened by the pan-Islamist policies pursued by the sultan. Yet the Kurds' dissatisfaction with the Unionist rule was more rooted in the taxation increase in the aftermath of the Balkan Wars.

External Reasons

The position of the Ottoman Empire in the international arena played an equally important role in the development of the Bitlis uprising. The previous campaigns to liberate the communities in the Ottoman Balkans, greatly facilitated by the Great Powers, highlight the importance of international state competition when explaining national liberation struggles. Especially after the liberation of the Balkan peoples from Ottoman sovereignty, Armenians and Albanians intensified their own bids for independent statehood. This pattern also affected the Kurds. A newspaper in the Caucasus illustrated this point on April 15:

Before the Balkan Wars the national ambition to unite was formulated by the most well-educated Kurdish leaders in the following way: every Ottoman nation cares about itself and strives to gain independence in order not to be dependent on Turkish bureaucrats. Only we Kurds lived and quarreled with each other and bribed the administration to avoid administrative pressure [this sentence is unclear]. It is impossible to continue this way. Kurdistan is the heritage of the Kurds and thus belongs to us, not to the Turks. We must win in order to gain victory over them and to form a Kurdish state without Turkish soldiers and bureaucrats. 44

The same Great Powers that ignited the rebellion in the Balkans began to intervene in the matter of the Kurds as well. The intentions of these countries to extend control over the Kurds and support them no doubt solidified Kurdish hopes for an independent state. In this sense the greatest impact on the Kurdish Question came from the policies of Great Britain and Russia. Russia in particular established close relations with the Kurdish leaders. Illustrative of these close ties was the interview with Abdürrezak Bedirhan, a famous Kurdish nationalist and one of the organizers of the Bitlis uprising, with the Russian vice-consul in Khoy (Hoy):

Being under Turkish and Persian pressure until this moment, the Kurds did not have the possibility to be in touch with the European civilization. It is no use to wait for any help from the Persians, who did not care about the education of the grassroots. The Turks in turn always tried to make us stay illiterate. That is why the Kurds are still in a very poorly developed and primitive state of mind. In this sense building up relations with Russians will help Kurds destroy the obstacles that cut them off from civilization for

centuries. And this will give them a chance to perceive Russia as our northern neighbor.⁴⁷

Later in the correspondence Abdürrezak asked the Russian vice-consul to support the Kurdish Gehandini cultural society. 48 Other Kurdish leaders sought Russian support as well. 49 For instance, such a request by Sheikh Mahmud from Mosul was reported by the Russian vice-consul N.M. Kirsanov in the following way:

Yesterday Kirsanov and I had a meeting with the messenger of Sheikh Mahmud from Süleimanie. The man presented the written authorization from his master. Despite the amnesty, the sheikh is very furious about the Turks, with revenge in his mind, and is going to use his great influence upon the Persian and Ottoman Kurds in the Süleimanie and Kirkuk regions. He also promises to maintain his position in case Russia seizes control of the region. In order to cause great disturbances that can result in the cooperation of the imperial government, he throws himself and the Kurds to our lot. If the circumstances are ripe, we expect from the Kurds not armed cooperation but at least an amicable and friendly attitude toward our troops as well as the provision of our troops with bandaging materials provided by them. ⁵⁰

While the Kurds relied upon Russian support in their ambitions for liberation, Russia in turn considered the Kurds to be a source of assistance in case of a war with the Ottoman Empire.⁵¹ But the main goal of Russia in this regard was to win over the support of Kurdish villages to utilize them as allies against the Ottoman Empire and use this influence to interfere with Ottoman domestic affairs in anticipation of war.⁵² Furthermore, other European countries responded to Russian schemes by also trying to strengthen their propaganda activities among the Kurds in an attempt to attract them to their side.⁵³ Despite such instances of competition Russia remained without any doubt the country with the most power and influence over the Kurds.⁵⁴ In the end Russia was not only the closest of the Great Powers to the Kurds in geographical terms but also tried to cultivate relations with the tribal Kurdish powerholders.⁵⁵ As for Russia, the Persian-Ottoman borderland was an important strategic buffer zone for Russian foreign policy. 56 Encouraging the Kurdish tribes in the buffer zone to mount raids into the Ottoman territories, Russia tried to maintain the aura of instability and thus promoted volatility in the region. Furthermore, Russia tried to settle the Kurdish notables and

political leaders such as Abdürrezak Bedirhan in the Caucasus in an attempt to utilize their stature to draw support from the Kurdish tribes in the Ottoman Empire.⁵⁷

THE BITLIS UPRISING

Before World War I Bitlis was the center of Kurdish unrest in the eastern provinces. Some organizers of the uprising such as Abdürrezak hailed from western Iran, which was under Russian control. The religious leaders in the eastern Ottoman provinces also proved crucial in the instigation of the rebellion, such as Molla Selim, Sheikh Shahabeddin, Yusuf Kamil, and Sheikh Said Ali. During a three-year period before the outbreak of the Bitlis uprising, these leaders, along with other members of the Bedirhan family, prepared the groundwork for the uprising, which would take place in March of 1914. Before the uprising V. Shirkov, the Russian consul in Bitlis, reported the Kurdish disturbances. For instance, his report of March 20, 1913, noted:

The Kurds of the Bitlis province have not declared their independence yet. As for the Kurds of Bedirhan in Besher in the Siirt sanjak [subdivision of a province], they began to raise taxes from the local populations on their own account. And, according to the report sent to the Consulate-General, one of the gendarmes was killed and one wounded. Having sent two eminent Kurds to Garzan and Besheri of the Siirt sanjak, the governor of Bitlis tried to reconcile such villages as Adikan and Penjar some time ago. In the mentioned sanjaks the disturbances among Kurds and the uprising against the Turkish government are gaining speed.⁵⁸

As Shirkov continued to report, the situation had worsened by the beginning of 1914. As Kurds started to acquire more arms, they began to intimidate the Ottoman government in an attempt to avoid the implementation of the Armenian reforms. ⁵⁹ Of course it should be noted that like the previous Kurdish uprisings these events in Bitlis were not characterized by the common and mutual demands of Kurds. As in the case of the uprising, its aims and demands were also diverse. This situation is described by Shirkov:

The aims and intentions of the Kurds are not common: one sector of the Kurds strives for building up a beylik [principality] there; others strive for reforms that would be favorable only for Kurds;

others try to prevent the application of the Armenian reforms; the fourth sector, in turn, wants to expel the Turks from there. The only common feature in this regard was that they all came to resist the authority of the central government despite having varied demands.⁶⁰

It may be added that the Kurdish leaders participating in the uprising, such as Sheikh Taha and Simko, all had an affinity with Russian interests. Interestingly, some sources also argued that Molla Selim had asked for support from Britain at the beginning of the uprising but, once refused, turned to Russia for help.⁶¹

The final trigger for the uprising was a set of events after the arrest of Molla Selim, who was taken into custody when he was promoting antigovernment ideas. Of course news of Molla Selim's arrest was ill received by his powerbase. When he was being transferred to Bitlis, an armed Kurdish militia of 700 secured his release in Kumach. ⁶² This unplanned arrest led to the breakout of the uprising a month earlier than was originally planned. ⁶³ This was the starting point for the uprising. The center of the rebellion was the village of Kumach, where many people gathered to participate. The number of rebels rose to four thousand by March 9. They fortified the village by building up ramparts around it, thereby strengthening the overall defense. Then they raised the rebel flag. At that time Armenian blacksmiths from the village of Hultic began producing battle axes that were ordered by Molla Selim. The Armenian blacksmiths from the village of Oleg made knives for the Kurdish fighters. ⁶⁴

Having built up the defenses, the rebels aimed to reach the town center of Bitlis, two hours away, and eventually seize the governmental offices there. The local government failed to contain the rebels, because it lacked the necessary military means. The principal demands of the Kurdish rebels were the restoration of Shari and, the removal of the Ottoman government from the region, and an end to the application of the Armenian reforms. The key factors in the development of the uprising were religious fanaticism and the growing unrest against the Armenian reform schemes. Leaders such as Abdürrezak Bedirhan and Yusuf Kamil Bedirhan might have had a broader national agenda, but the sheikhs who led the uprising, such as Molla Selim, just cashed in on the religious sentiments of Kurds.

Molla Selim did actually meet the Armenians and told them that the uprising was not orchestrated against them. On behalf of the leaders of the rebellion, the infamous Sheikh Said Ali accordingly made a proposal to collaborate with the Armenian revolutionary organization, the Dashnaks. Suat Akgül argued that the Russians needed to hand out money and make promises to the village elders and the religious figureheads in order to facilitate such a Kurdish and Armenian alliance. Yet the Armenians began to panic and sent a telegram to the Armenian patriarch, informing him about the impending danger for the Armenian people in the region. This was true. Overall the rebellion triggered two main sources of fear as far as the broader Christian population was concerned. First, the rebels said that with this uprising they intended to restore Shari'a. Second, Kurds used the chaotic environment to extort and loot Armenian property. In this sense the participation of a great number of robbers in the uprising contributed to the Armenian panic. One such robber was Cheto Beshar, who was notorious in Armenian circles.

As the events unraveled and led to hazardous conditions, Mazhar Bey, the governor of Bitlis, declared martial law and sent out a delegation composed of eight people to meet with Molla Selim. These efforts proved to be worse than useless. The delegation sent to Molla Selim ended up strengthening his influence and authority among the Kurds. Mazhar Bey faced accusations of mishandling the situation and thus was replaced by Abdülhaluk Bey, the mutasarrıf of Siirt. According to the governor of Van, Tahsin Bey, the situation at that point was as follows:

Samet Efendi, the chief commissioner, was sent to Gevash to report on the general state of the local inhabitants and to investigate the events that took place in and around Hizan and Bitlis. Going from village to village from Gevash to Fargican and then heading toward Hizan and then to Bitlis, Samet Efendi came back today. As a commissioner who is considered to be a smart and influential person, he reports that there is unrest all around the Bitlis province. As for the unrest in Bitlis itself, it has reached high levels. The poor Kurdish peasants say that everyone from Arabia to Istanbul supports the cause of the Kurds and there is no other way but restoring Shari^ca. Moreover, they fear that the *khutbah* [sermons] will be delivered in Hizar and Gira in the name of Enver Paşa, the Qur'an will be translated into Turkish, and the eastern provinces will be given to Russia. It is also said that the sheikhs gathered together in the hamlet where Molla Selim lives invited some of the Kurdish villagers from Motki to meet there; he and the villagers attacked the gendarmes and seized their arms. The Bedirhans can be mentioned as the faction responsible for these

problems. The general uprising is supposed to take place after the snow melts. But it should be highlighted that the reason for such rebellious acts was the action of Mazhar Bey, the former governor. The Kurds are cunning and brave, and the new governor is alone. Despite the fact that two battalions were sent, he does not trust anyone. Mustafa Bey reports that some actions will be taken against the sheikhs. According to the reports, it is deduced that two thousand people gathered overall for the rebellious cause. Some of them are armed, but the number of rebels is increasing day by day. I reported to Mustafa Bey that the hesitation of the gendarmes and the increasing number of Kurdish rebels must be taken into consideration for any future action. Without doubt one could sense the Russian intrigue in the overall course of the uprising.⁷³

In an attempt to sever the relationship between Molla Selim and the Kurds of Bitlis, the new governor positioned gendarmes around the town. Molla Selim in turn was looking for an appropriate place to position his own forces and sent four rebel soldiers to the Armenian church named Hindirakatar near Bitlis. But all of them were trapped and captured and sent back to Bitlis by the gendarmes. Meanwhile Molla Selim gave notice to the governor, demanding the immediate release of his four fighters. If his demand was not fulfilled, he threatened that his forces would start capturing the Ottoman gendarmes. The governor rejected such demands and led his soldiers to Kumach. But the rebels successfully drove back the troops. On the early morning of Thursday, April 2, about 1,200 Kurdish rebels entered the town. According to the witness reports, only about 700 of the rebel bandits were armed with swords, axes, spades, daggers, knives, and guns.74 The rebels seized control of the town for some time. On April 3 Bitlis received some assistance from the neighboring provinces.⁷⁵ As the government tried to contain the unrest, Abdürrezak and Sheikh Dzelalettin began organizing propaganda against the government by sending telegrams to the religious leaders in Midyat. They argued that the troops had been withdrawn from Van and that the region had been sold to Armenians. Thus the collapse of Islam and the establishment of Shari a were at hand.

Accordingly, all the Muslim Kurds were against the government, and it was necessary to protect the national and religious rights of the Armenians.⁷⁶ Thus the rebel leaders resorted to religious themes in their battle against the Unionists and the Armenian opposition. Yet the Ottoman

authorities began to take control of the issue. Neither the support of some religious leaders nor the help of the representatives of the Kurdish ruling class overcame the government's authority. After some time additional government forces sent to the region were able to oust the Kurdish from the town. The rebels started to run away in disarray. The Ottoman government arrested forty-two rebels, and about 150 people were killed or wounded. On April 23 the government sentenced eleven Kurds to death and summarily executed them on the morning of May 7. Among them were the most prominent figures of the uprising, such as Sheikh Shahabeddin and Said Ali.

But Molla Selim, accompanied by three of his followers, took refuge in the Russian consulate in Bitlis. The Ottoman government exerted pressure upon Russia to deliver him, but such requests were not honored by the Russian authorities. Russia's refusals in this sense clearly suggest that the uprising had "attained a political character." ⁸¹ As a result the Russian consulate was surrounded by the Ottoman troops to prevent Molla Selim's escape. Not long after that Molla Selim's followers spread the rumor that he had already left the consulate. The consul of Bitlis also confirmed these rumors. 82 Nevertheless, according to the Ottoman archival records, these statements were merely ploys to thwart the government's search for Molla Selim and facilitate his escape. Thus the Ottomans continued their search for the rebels and Molla Selim. His request that the Russian government grant him asylum was finally rejected.83 Accordingly, Molla Selim was immediately seized when he left the consulate and executed.84 The application filed by twenty-nine Kurdish sheikhs who asked that mercy be shown to Molla Selim and Sheikh Shahabeddin, his companion, was thus not honored by the Ottoman authorities. 85 At that time the governors of different vilayets and sanjaks took various measures to minimize the effects of the uprising upon the broader populations in the region.86

In all this Russia supported the Kurdish rebels in an attempt to create instability in the Ottoman Empire. When the Committee of Union and Progress organized a top-level meeting to discuss the Kurdish situation in general and the Bitlis uprising in particular, the Russian ambassador to Istanbul described this meeting as follows: "In compliance with the position of the party leadership, the most important thing is to make Kurds to accept a new kind of governance where the equality of all Ottoman populations before law, as guaranteed by the Constitution, would be honored." It should be noted, however, that the government only partially succeeded in this issue. Only the most educated Kurds assumed

positions within the government. According to Mithat Şükrü, the foes of the current administration included the former officer Saffet Bey, Kemal, the relatives of Bedirhan, and Simko. Simko relying on the Turkish revolutionary committees in Odessa and Batumi and on securing the Russian consuls' support in agitating the Kurds for the uprising. Among their plans was the occupation of Bitlis. Maybe Muş could be next after Bitlis, or they could demand administrative autonomy in these regions from Istanbul. Apparently the Ottoman government was aware of the plans for the uprising but did not manage to neutralize the instigators. Nevertheless, the rebels' attempt to occupy Bitlis also proved a futile attempt.

Taking into account the general state of the Kurds and the remaining instigators of the uprising whom the government failed to capture, the Ottoman authorities decided to establish direct links with the Kurds and to support them financially in order to win them over with the help of their powerful followers in Istanbul.⁸⁸

The CUP discussed the general state of the Ottomans inside the country:

The consul-general announced that the Bitlis uprising is considered to be finished, at least officially, and order was restored by the troops sent from the neighboring vilayets. At the same time general dissatisfaction is noticed among the local populations. From time to time this general discontent and the increase in taxation were used by Simko, Abdürrezak, and other leaders to instigate a rebellion at a grassroots level. Thus the Ottoman government advised the local governor to inform the general populations about the temporary character of taxation hikes, to frame this as a necessity to cover the costs of constant warfare, and to attempt to stir patriotic sentiments.⁸⁹

The reports by the Ottoman government during and after the uprising highlighted a number of reasons for the general discontent in the region. Mustafa Abdülhaluk Bey, the governor of Bitlis, noted:

The aghas and the sheikhs who took part in the uprising were not satisfied with constitutional governance. They strove to win their previous rights and benefits back. Therefore they tried to destroy the constitutional government. Declaring the collapse of Shari'a and religion, the sheikhs mobilized the larger populations. They demanded Shari'a. The Great Powers, especially Russia, incited

the Kurds. This uprising can be seen as a reflection of some of the problems that have existed in the region for so long. The region has been struggling with these problems for nearly four hundred years. Problems on the path of progress such as the ones caused by tekkes [dervish lodges], the absence of the government, and the land problem have existed here for a long time. Frankly speaking, Armenians are not pitiful, but Kurds are the pitiful ones. They are in a captive state.... Therefore it is necessary to seize tekkes, capture the killers and oppressors, and give the land that was taken away from the Armenians back to them. 90

The report clearly put the emphasis on the religious fanaticism of the Kurds in eastern Anatolia as well as how these attachments came to work out in the clashes with the Armenian communities. Such an emphasis undoubtedly shows that the Kurdish disturbances in general and the Bitlis uprising in particular were related to the broader reaction to the Armenian reform plans and to the reintroduction of the Ottoman Constitution, which was perceived by the Sunni Kurdish tribes as an assertion of legal equality between the Muslims and non-Muslims.

THE AFTERMATH OF THE BITLIS UPRISING

During the Bitlis uprising, the Unionists were also concerned with the uprising in the Mosul vilayet led by Sheikh Abdülselam, the leader of Barzan village. The sheikh of Barzan, who rebelled after the revolution of 1908, often brought great losses to the Ottoman Empire. This time he orchestrated his second uprising to avoid paying his due taxes.⁹¹ Some villages in eastern Kurdistan, however, were under British control. The sheikh of Barzan's attempts to secure British support as well as the negotiations of the British consul with the sheikh in Mosul showcase the British schemes behind the uprising. Despite the failure of the Bitlis uprising, we can see that the Kurdish leaders, especially Simko and Abdürrezak in Khoy, continued their rebellious activities intensively. They planned to seek foreign intervention in the eastern provinces after the execution of the Kurdish leaders by the Ottoman government as a result of the uprising. These local power struggles between the Ottoman central and local authorities and the influential Kurdish power magnates in different localities would soon turn into an actual war after the Bitlis uprising, particularly with the entry of the Armenians and Russians into the picture by the beginning of World War I.

CONCLUSION

The Bitlis revolt is one of the most significant rebellions at the turn of the twentieth century. The importance of this uprising is rooted not in the quantitative strength of the rebels or in the level of participation on the part of the masses but rather in the causes that created such a scale of public disturbance. The reasons for the uprising in this particular instance actually reflected the general characteristics of the late Ottomans, when the reactions to the Armenian reforms as well as the reinstatement of the Ottoman constitution after 1908 came to shape the dynamics and course of public unrest. The uprising clearly showcased the level of unease among the Kurds in the Ottoman Empire. In this sense the main axis of the Kurdish political movement, as embodied in the disturbances and uprisings spearheaded by the Kurds in the region, was their growing unease about the Armenian reform plans, as reflected in the broader rivalry between the two communities. The Kurdish reaction to Unionist rule was similarly rooted in the assertion of legal equality by mere virtue of the restoration of the constitution after 1908. Such dynamics of Kurdish opposition to the Porte clearly indicate that the Bitlis uprising was not a nationalist revolt—claims to that effect would be anachronistic to say the least.

The Great Powers and their officials in the eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire also attentively observed the Bitlis uprising. Russia in particular, as the major power with vested interest in the region as well as investment with the Kurdish political leaders and tribes, attached great significance to this uprising. It is illustrative that Molla Selim, the leader of the uprising, took refuge in the Bitlis Consulate of Russia after the suppression of the rebellion by Ottoman forces. Even though the Armenians constituted the main element in its Middle Eastern policy, the Russians welcomed any disturbance that would further expose the vulnerability and instability in the eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire. This is clear in their evident satisfaction with the further instability that came to dominate the language of the Russian consulate reports of the period.

NOTES

 For such secondary accounts, see Mehmet Eröz, Kürtlerin Menşei ve Türkmenlerin Kürtleşmesi; İsmet Parmaksızoğlu, Tarih Boyunca Kürttürkleri ve Türkmenler, 2–5, 54–67; Necdet Sevinç, "Kürtlerin Türklüğü Üzerine Notlar"; Mahmut Rişvanoğlu, Saklanan Gerçek Kurmanclar ve Zazaların Kimliği, 619–71; idem, Doğu Aşiretleri ve Emperyalizm; Abdulhaluk Çay, Her Yönüyle Kürt Dosyası.

- 2. M. Kalman, Osmanlı-Kürt İlişkileri ve Sömürgecilik; Kemal Burkay, Geçmişten Bugüne Kürtler ve Kürdistan, 229; Nuri Dersimi, Dersim Tarihi; İsmail Göldaş, Kürdistan Teali Cemiyeti; Kemal Mazhar Ahmed, Birinci Dünya Savaşı Yıllarında Kürdistan. Certainly it is possible to list additional titles that voice anachronistic opinions about Kurdish history.
- 3. Hamit Bozarslan, "Türkiye'de Yazılı Kürt Tarihi Söylemi Üzerine Bazı Hususlar (1919–1980)," 35–36.
- Abbas Vali, "Milliyetçilik ve Köken Sorunu," in Kürt Milliyetçiliğinin Kökenleri (Istanbul: Avesta, 2005), 31.
- 5. John P. LeDonne, The Grand Strategy of the Russian Empire, 1650–1831, 139–41.
- 6. Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide*, 30; Alan Bodger, "Russia and the End of the Ottoman Empire," 74.
- 7. Ibid.; Akdes Nimet Kurat, *Türkiye ve Rusya*, 117–20.
- 8. For tsarist Russia's policy toward the Armenians, see V. G. Tunyan, Rossiia i Armianskii Vopros; Dz. Kirakosyan, Zapadnaia Armeniia v Gody Pervoi Mirovoi Voiny; A. V. Amfiteatrov, Armianskii Vopros; Sean McMeekin, The Russian Origins of the First World War, 141–74; Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeni-Rus İlişkileri (1841–1898).
- 9. Bloxham, *The Great Game*, 29–30; McMeekin, *The Russian Origins of the First World War*, 145; Kurat, *Türkiye ve Rusya*, 111–15.
- 10. The most prominent source for the relations of the Russian officials with the Kurdish tribes and the tribal chiefs was written by a Russian official in the Caucasian region: P. I. Averyanov, Kurdy v Voinakh Rossii s Persiei i Turtsiei v Techenie XIX Stoletiia.
- 11. For more information about the growing tensions in international relations before World War I, see Alec L. Macfie, *The Eastern Question*, 1774–1923, 56, 74–78; Matthew Smith Anderson, *Doğu Sorunu* 1774–1923; Richard F. Hamilton and Holger H. Nerwig, eds., *The Origins of World War I*; A. V. Ignatiev, *Vneshniaia Politika Rossii* (1907–1914), 58–80; P. N. Efremov, *Vneshniaia Politika Rossii* (1907–1914), 33–43.
- 12. Efremov, Vneshniaia Politika Rossii (1907–1914), 7–15.
- For more information about the penetration of German imperialism into Turkey see İlber Ortaylı, Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Alman Nüfuzu.
- 14. For more information about the Eastern Question, see Anderson, *Doğu Sorunu*.
- 15. Dzhalile Dzhalil, "Vosstanie kurdov v XIX v.," 5.
- 16. Martin van Bruinessen, Aga, Şeyh, Devlet, 269, 274–77; Dzhalil, "Vosstanie Kurdov v XIX v.," 6–8; Denise Natali, The Kurds and the State, 6; Averyanov, Kurdy v Voinakh Rossii s Persiei i Turtsiei v Techenie XIX Stoletiia, 289. Furthermore, centrifugal tendencies were totally prevailing in the region: see P.I. Averyanov, Etnograficheskii i Voenno-politicheskii Obzor Aziatskikh Vladenii Ottomanskoi Imperii, 45–46; A.M. Menteshavili, Kurdy, 28; Ellsworth Huntington, "The Valley of the Upper Euphrates River and Its People," 385.
- 17. Richard Tapper, "Introduction," 9; Lale Yalçın-Heckmann, *Tribe and Kinship among the Kurds*, 100.
- 18. Bruinessen, *Ağa, Şeyh, Devlet*, 239–41; David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds*, 27, 40; W.R. Hay, *Two Years in Kurdistan*, 67.

- 19. Bruinessen, Ağa, Şeyh, Devlet, 267; Bilal N. Şimşir, Kürtçülük, 105; Helmut von Moltke, Türkiye Mektupları.
- 20. Wadie Jwaideh, Kürt Milliyetçiliginin Tarihi, 144.
- 21. The leading country proposing the Armenian issue for the agenda was undoubtedly Russia. Dzhalil, "Vosstanie Kurdov v XIX v.," 13; Şimşir, Kürtçülük, 116–29; Kurat, Türkiye ve Rusya, 115; Bloxham, The Great Game, 45; McMeekin, The Russian Origins of the First World War, 145. For the Berlin Treaty of 1878 and its consequences for international politics, see Anderson, Doğu Sorunu, 235–72; M. Hakan Yavuz and Peter Sluglett, eds., War and Diplomacy.
- 22. Şimşir, Kürtçülük, 180.
- 23. Quite a lot of contemporary sources emphasize the ceaseless attacks of some Kurdish brigands on Armenian villages and also the exploitation of Armenians by Kurdish tribal chiefs. See X. F. B. Linch, *Armeniia*, 202–3, 544–45; V. T. Maevsky, *Voenno-staticheskoe Opisanie Vanskogo i Bitlisskogo Vilaetov*, 78, 80–81; R. I. Termen, *Otchet o Poezdke v Sanjak Hekkiari Vanskogo Vilaeta v 1906 Godu*, 143. This aspect of the Kurdish Question has also been referred in current works. See Menteshavili, *Kurdy*, 39; Bloxham, *The Great Game*, 39–40; Jeremy Salt, *Imperialism*, *Evangelism*, and the Ottoman Armenians, 1878–1896, 26, 67.
- 24. Although the term "Kurds" is used here, it denotes the Kurdish tribes as the possessors of a certain level of political strength in the region, because there was a sharp difference between the tribal and non-tribal Kurds. Leading seminomadic lives and often raiding sedentary communities (whether non-Muslims like Armenians or Muslims like the non-tribal Kurdish groups), these tribes emerged as one of the most significant political powerholders in the region.
- 25. For scholarly accounts of the Unionist era, see Masami Arai, Jön Türk Dönemi Türk Milliyetçiliği; Feroz Ahmad, İttihat ve Terakki (1908–1914); Sina Akşin, Jön Türkler ve İttihat ve Terakki; Erik J. Zürcher, Modernleşen Türkiye'nin Tarihi; Tarık Zafer Tunaya, Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler, vol. 1; M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, Osmanlı İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti ve Jön Türklük (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1985).
- 26. For further information about this paper, see Malmisanij, *Kürt Teavün ve Terakki Cemiyeti ve Gazetesi* (Istanbul: Avesta, 1999).
- 27. For further information regarding Kurdish organizations of that period, see ibid.; Hakan Özoğlu, *Kurdish Notables and the Ottoman State*, 77–81.
- 28. M. S. Lazarev, Kurdistan i Kurdskii Vopros, 147.
- Ernest E. Ramsaur, Jön Türkler ve 1908 İhtilali, 81. For more information about Abdullah Cevdet, the famous Kurdish intellectual, see M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, Bir Siyasal Düşünür Olarak Abdullah Cevdet ve Dönemi.
- On the development of the new Turkish bourgeoisie, see Zafer Toprak, Türkiye'de "Milli İktisat" 1908–1918; Feroz Ahmad, İttihatçılıktan Kemalizme, 34–81.
- 31. Fuat Dündar, Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi, 73-84.
- 32. For a detailed work about the Turkish Hearth, see Füsun Üstel, *Türk Ocakları* 1912–1931.
- 33. Celadet Bedirhan, *Bir Kürt Aydınından Mustafa Kemal'e Mektup*, 70.
- 34. The term "Armenian reforms" means the Porte's commitment according to article 61 of the Berlin Treaty to providing reforms in order to improve the general

- condition of the Armenians and also protect them from the raids of Kurdish and Circissian brigands. The executing of this article was left to the Great Powers. Kirakosyan, *Zapadnaia Armeniia v Gody Pervoi Mirovoi Voiny*, 37; Kurat, *Türkiye* ve *Rusya*, 114.
- 35. Jwaideh, Kürt Milliyetçiliğinin Tarihi, 171.
- 36. For more information about the Hamidiye regiments, see Janet Klein, "Power in the Periphery"; Stephen Duguid, "The Politics of Unity; Bayram Kodaman, Sultan II. Abdülhamit Devri Doğu Anadolu Politikası, 21–66; F. F. Griaznov, "Kurdy i Kurdskaia Konnitsa," 1–33.
- 37. V. A. Gordlevsky, "Iz Zhizni Kurdov," 458; Averyanov, *Kurdy v Voinakh Rossii s*Persiei i Turtsiei v Techenie XIX Stoletiia, 279–80; Kodaman, Sultan II. Abdülhamit

 Devri Doğu Anadolu Politikası, 60; Dzhalil, "Vosstanie Kurdov v XIX v." 14.
- 38. Klein, "Power in the Periphery," 125.
- 39. Linch, *Armeniia*, 545; M. S. Lazarev, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun İflasının Arifesinde Kürdistan," 74.
- 40. The rearrangement of the Hamidiye regiments was one of the first issues on the Young Turks' agenda. See Klein, "Power in the Periphery," 193.
- 41. For instance, Bitlis Kurds organized anticonstitution demonstrations. Even in certain public gatherings that featured the participation of the sheikhs speeches were made that rejected the new constitution. Arkhiv Vneshnei Politiki Rossiiskoi Imperii/Archives of Foreign Policy of the Russian Empire, Moscow (hereafter AVPRI) "Politarkhiv," 1908, D. 542, l. 58 ob., Consulate in Bitlis, from August 5, 1908.
- 42. AVPRI, "Posol'stvo v Konstantinopole," 1909, D. 1401 b, l. 5, secret report of Akimovich to Zinovyev from April 12, 1909.
- 43. AVPRI, "Politarkhiv," 1908, D. 1644, l. 132, secret report of Skriabin to the ambassador of Constantinople from October 24, 1908.
- 44. Ibid., l. 38, to the first department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from Chancellery of the governor-general.
- 45. Lazarev, Kurdistan i Kurdskii Vopros, 87, 103.
- 46. Abdürrezak, who was born in 1864, was the grandchild of Bedirhan. He worked in the Ministry of Foreign Policy in the reign of Abdülhamid II and for two years served in the Ottoman Consulate of Petersburg. He had good contact with Russian officials in Caucasia. After some time he and some members of Bedirhan's family were accused of the murder of Rıdvan Paşa, the mayor of Istanbul, and were exiled to Tripoli. After returning from exile, he continued to be in contact with Russian officials, particularly with N. V. Charikov, the Russian general-consul in Istanbul. In the end Abdürezzak went to Tiflis with the permission of Petersburg and then was appointed to the Russian service. Erdal Aydoğan, İttihat ve Terakki'nin Doğu Politikası (Istanbul: Ötüken, 2005), 182; AVPRI, "Posol'stvo v Konstantinopole," 1907–1913, D. 3572, l. 57, telegram to Kohanovsky, Tiflis, November 20, 1910; ibid., l. 74, to Kohanovsky, June 7, 1911; Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi/Prime Ministry Ottoman Archive in Istanbul (hereafter BOA), DH.SYS.24:2-1, from the Ministry of Interior to the Provinces of Erzurum, Van, Bitlis, and Diyarbakır, 23 Şubat 1326 (March 11, 1911).

- 47. AVPRI, "Posol'stvo v Konstantinopole," 1912–14, D. 3573, l. 23, secret report of Chirkov to the agent in Tehran, February 14, 1913.
- 48. Ibid., l. 24.
- 49. Ibid., ll. 23–26; ibid., l. 226, secret telegram of the deputy in the Caucasus, December 16, 1913; Ibid, ll. 231, 236, secret report of vice-consul in Hoy to the embassy in Constantinople and to the first department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, December 22, 1913
- 50. Ibid., l. 16, Orlov's telegram in Baghdad to St. Petersburg, February 27, 1912.
- 51. Ibid., l. 38, copy of the report of a command post in the Caucasus, February 8, 1913.
- 52. Ibid., l. 37, report of Kirsanov to the embassy in Constantinople, February 8, 1913.
- 53. Lazarev, Kurdistan i Kurdskii Vopros, 168; Celile Celil, Kürt Aydınlanması, 37, 94.
- Lazarev noted that "the greatest part of the Kurdish people were amicable toward Russia, hoping for their possible liberation from Turkish control": Lazarev, Kurdistan i Kurdskii Vopros, 87.
- 55. See Averyanov, Kurdy v Voinakh Rossii s Persiei i Turtsiei v Techenie XIX Stoletiia.
- 56. Russia attached great importance to this zone and was trying to use the convenient position of the Ottoman-Persian border for its own aims. This strategy has been expressed by the Russian officials: "Deiatelnost' Turok v Kurdistane": in Svodka Svedenii o Sopredelnikh Stranakh, Dobytikh Razvedkoi, za Vremia s 15-go Maia po 1-oe liunya 1913, no. 47 (Tiflis, 1913), 8-9. Like the Russians, Ottoman officials were also aware of the importance of the Ottoman-Persian border and Russia's use of this zone for martial purposes. See BOA, DH.KMS, Dosya No. 2/1, Gömlek Sıra No. 36, from Khoy and Salmas Consulate, 25 Kanun-i Evvel 1913 (January 7, 1913).
- 57. Abdürrezak promised the Russian officials that he would strive to gain the support of the Kurdish tribes for Petersburg and also would provoke them against the Ottoman and Persian states. AVPRI, 1907–1913, D. 3572, l. 64, secret telegram of D. S. S. Kokhanovsky to the ambassador in Istanbul, March 8, 1911. Another striking example is Hayderanlı Hüseyin Paşa, the former Hamidian tribal chief. After the Young Turks came to power he and some influential tribal leaders sought refuge in Russia and moved to Maku in Iran. So did the Russian officials in Caucasia try to use this case to realize Petersburg's aim? AVPRI, ll. 15–17, secret consideration of the Caucasian Military Headquarters to the General Staff, January 5, 1910.
- 58. AVPRI, l. 72, from Bitlis to the embassy in Constantinople, March 20, 1913.
- 59. Ibid., l. 241, from Bitlis to K. N. Gulkevich, February 12, 1914.
- 60. Ibid., ll. 241–42, from Bitlis to K. N. Gulkevich, February 12, 1914.
- 61. See, for example, Mim Kemal Öke, Musul-Kürdistan Sorunu, 26.
- 62. AVPRI, "Politarkhiv," 1914, D. 3312, l. 2, secret report of Russian ambassador in Constantinople, February 27, 1914.
- 63. In accordance with the report of Yusuf Kamil Bedirhan, who was a Russian authorized representative, Yusuf Kamil considered himself to be a leader of the uprising after its failure. But due to the careless actions of Molla Selim and his companions the uprising broke out a month earlier than it had been planned and failed. AVPRI, l. 346, from the General Consulate in Syria to the embassy in Constantinople, June 6, 1914.

- 64. Celile Celil's view is based on the Armenian newspaper Azamart, March 27, 1914. Celile Celil, Kürt Halk Tarihinden 13 İlginç Yaprak, 126. Probably during this period some of the Armenian gangs released such news because Kurds wanted to build good relationships with the Ottomans. That is why the authenticity of this information is difficult to ascertain.
- AVPRI, l. 2, secret report of Russian ambassador in Constantinople, February 27, 1914.
- 66. AVPRI, "Posol'stvo v Konstantinopole," 1912–14, D. 3573, from Bitlis to the embassy of Constantinople, March 7, 1914.
- 67. AVPRI, l. 271.
- 68. Molla Selim framed his actions in terms of Shari^ca. BOA, DH.ŞFR, Dosya No. 421, Vesika No. 29, from Bitlis province to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, March 16, 1914.
- 69. Suat Akgül, Rusya'nın Doğu Anadolu Politikası, 97, 105.
- 70. Michael A. Reynolds, "The Ottoman-Russian Struggle for Eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus (1908–1918)," 125, 126.
- 71. AVPRI, "Politarkhiv," 1914, D. 3312, l. 2, secret report of Russian ambassador in Constantinople, March 3, 1914.
- BOA, DH.KMS, Dosya No. 16, Gömlek Sıra No. 30, secret report from Van province, March 19, 1914.
- 73. BOA, DH.ŞFR, Dosya No. 422, Vesika No. 72, from Diyarbakır to the Ministry of Internal Affairs (March 31, 1914.
- 74. Celil, Kürt Halk Tarihinden 13 İlginç Yaprak, 126–29.
- 75. AVPRI, "Posol'stvo v Konstantinopole," 1912–14, D. 3573, ll. 273–73, from Bitlis to the embassy in Constantinople, March 7, 1914.
- 76. BOA, DH.ŞFR, Dosya No. 423, Vesika No. 9, from Diyarbakır province to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, April 5, 1914.
- 77. See BOA, DH.EUM.2.ŞB., Dosya No. 1, Vesika No. 28.
- 78. AVPRI, "Politarkhiv," 1914, 3312, l. 18, secret report of Russian ambassador in Constantinople, March 22, 1914.
- BOA, DH.ŞFR, Dosya No. 423, Vesika No. 5, from Bitlis province to Ministry of Internal Affairs, April 4, 1914.
- 80. Celil, Kürt Halk Tarihinden 13 İlginç Yaprak, 133-35.
- 81. AVPRI, l. 36, secret report of authorized representative in Constantinople, April 29, 1914.
- BOA, DH.ŞFR, Dosya No. 425, Vesika No. 1, to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, April 25, 1914.
- 83. AVPRI, l. 16, secret telegram of the ambassador in Constantinople.
- 84. BOA, DH.ŞFR, Dosya No. 447, Vesika No. 54, from Bitlis province to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, August 9, 1914.
- 85. BOA, DH.ŞFR, Dosya No. 424, Vesika No. 27, from Bitlis province to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, April 17, 1914.
- 86. The governor of Dersim, for example, thought that it was necessary to present the uprising from the government point of view to Kurds of Dersim. BOA, DH.ŞFR, Dosya No. 423, Vesika No. 47, from Dersim to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, April 8, 1914. The governor of Van believed that Molla Selim's uprising was seen in

- Russia and in Iran as a common Kurdish rebellion and that this opinion should be corrected. BOA, DH.ŞFR, Dosya No. 425, Vesika No. 14, from Van province to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, April 27, 1914.
- 87. AVPRI, l. 25, dispatch of the ambassador in Constantinople, March 31, 1914.
- 88. AVPRI, l. 26, dispatch of the ambassador in Constantinople, March 31, 1914.
- 89. Ibid., l. 31, dispatch of the ambassador in Constantinople, April 12, 1914.
- 90. BOA, DH.ŞFR, Dosya No. 423, Vesika No. 47, from Bitlis province to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, April 15, 1914.
- 91. Lazarev, Kurdistan i Kurdskii Vopros, 127.

The Eastern Vilayets, 1909–1914

ARF-CUP Collusion, Russian Stratagems, and the Kurdish Menace

Garabet K. Moumdjian

Armenian-Turkish relations in the period 1909 to 1914 desperately need to be revisited and reevaluated. The meager historical discourses developed thus far by Armenian and Turkish historians are not only linear, rehashed, and thus outdated but also problematic in terms of their inability to deliver a clear picture of the complex issues under discussion. This chapter attempts to construct several new historical paradigms that favor historical complexity, with the intention of shedding new light on the period in question.¹

The relation between the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF, Dashnaktsutyun) and the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP, İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti) after the constitutional revolution in 1908 is by all means complex and multifaceted. The overthrow of Sultan Abdülhamid II as a result of the abortive counterrevolution of 1909 deprived the CUP and the ARF of a clear and common internal enemy. In the absence of common ground they had to focus on Russia as a mutual opponent against whom they had to cooperate. This chapter does not present a full narrative of these complex relations, which can be only treated in a full-length academic study. Even though the narrative at times brings in policies formulated in the capitals and chancelleries of the states involved, its theater of events is the area encompassing the eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire, northwestern Iran, and the Trans-Caucasus. This is the larger geographic region where the events of this narrative occurred. What has probably deterred historians from tackling the subject matter is the paucity of primary archival material dealing with the issues that are discussed in this narrative.

Indeed the archival records from at least four distinct entities (Russian, Ottoman, British, and ARF) imply directly or indirectly that in the period under discussion major actors within the ARF and the CUP espoused an anti-Russian stance, which characterized the history of the ARF-CUP relations from 1909 to at least 1913 and even until mid-1914.² ARF-CUP relations were "officially" ruptured in 1912 per the dictum of the ARF Sixth General World Congress that convened in Constantinople in 1911, so the issue of any continued collaboration between the two sides well into 1913 and 1914 becomes all the more problematic. How could two political organizations that had broken off all relations still continue to cooperate? Was this a logical indication of a recognized duality that existed within the ARF itself, especially between its Constantinople leadership (ARF Western Bureau) and its counterpart in the eastern provinces (ARF Eastern Bureau and later the ARF All Armenia Bureau)? Finally, this continued collaboration was clandestine in nature. Does this mean that various ARF bodies pursued different political and military agendas imposed on them by their geographic locations?

By addressing such issues, this study challenges the dominant discourse of the conflict existing between the ARF and the CUP and shows that both sides continued their cooperation well beyond 1912. This contradicts the current dominant historiography, which underlines the enduring power struggle between them, and in itself produces a paradigm shift in the historiography of the period under discussion.

The second main problem with the existing Ottoman-Armenian historiography is that it focuses on the Turks and Armenians as the main actors and excludes discussion of other players. This is a somewhat deliberate silence on the role of the Kurds, who were another major agent agitating the conflict. Yet this domestic political climate of rivalries and cooperation only makes sense when Russia is seen as the key player in the conflict. The main argument of this chapter is that the source of the conflict in the eastern provinces was the lawlessness and physical insecurity that Armenians felt because of the Kurds. Moreover, the main aim of the Armenians, often alluded to as the "agrarian problem" (essentially meaning previous land grabs by the Kurds), could not be achieved because of the ineffectiveness of the Ottoman state, coupled with Russian efforts to keep the area in constant turmoil. During the period under discussion, the Ottoman central government was weak in the eastern periphery and was so preoccupied with several daunting military operations elsewhere (Yemen, Tripolitania-Libya, the Balkans) that it was unable to provide security and to realize the return of lands, even though some earnest efforts were made in that regard.

THE "ADANA SYNDROME" AND THE FUTURE OF INTERETHNIC STRIFE IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

It is no secret that the most important issue introduced by the Armenian political apparatus with the advent of the new constitutional era was land reform. Lands that were seized during the reign of Abdülhamid II by Kurdish chieftains, Circassians, and others were restored to Armenian ownership, because land grabs essentially deprived Armenian peasants of their plots, especially in the eastern provinces of the empire. This put the Armenians on a path of direct collision with the Kurds. This element is of extreme importance, as discussed below.

But the fledgling political freedom that the constitutional revolution had ushered in was soon shattered by the counterrevolution of 1909 and the ensuing Adana massacres. Historically speaking, a new subparadigm is in place here: the Adana massacres must be viewed through the prism of local spheres of influence. The constitution had benefited the minorities. Members of the Adana landed Muslim "aristocracy" (the ayan class) were strongly aware that Armenian progress was going to impinge on their very livelihood and would be detrimental to their future. The case of the Adana massacres of 1909, contrary to the massacres that had been committed before (during the reign of Abdülhamid II, for example), manifests how interethnic rivalry was to be shaped during the new constitutional period.⁴ The huge death toll within such a short period was out of bounds compared to earlier massacres. It was an ethnic cleansing par excellence. Moreover, the lesson to be learned from the Adana events was that this new formula for interethnic strife was to become extremely corrosive and ferocious. The land issue itself would be detrimental to Armenian existence in the Ottoman Empire (especially in the eastern provinces) in the years to come, reaching its apex during World War I. Despite the bitter aftertaste that the Adana massacres left for the Armenian community in general and its political establishment in particular, the ARF licked its wounds and continued on the path of cooperation with the new constitutional regime to avoid endangering the existence of what was assumed to be the best solution for the future of a multiethnic empire.

The Armenian and especially the Young Turk leaders, however, should at least have anticipated that the outcome of the Adana massacres would not bode well for the very future of the empire that they were trying to salvage. The landed Muslim aristocracy was so bewildered by the constitution and what it aspired to offer to the Christian minorities of the empire that it was ready even to take up arms and to revolt against the constitutional regime itself, embodied by the CUP. It wanted to regain

its previous status of dominance over Christian minorities. This seemed especially true in the case of Kurdish chieftains in the eastern provinces. They even went so far as to institute an alliance with the ultimate enemy of the empire, the Russians, in order to stem the advance of the constitutional regime and its Christian allies. The Russian factor weighs in heavily vis-à-vis the Armenian case from this perspective.

Moreover, the future manifestations of this "Adana syndrome" were to become more striking with the heightened interethnic strife that characterized the two Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913. Here the case was reversed: it was the Muslim element of Rumelia (the European part of the Ottoman Empire) that had to endure the deportations, mayhem, and massacres, which took a heavy human and material toll. All this happened before the eyes of European powers, which showed no interest whatsoever in the uprooting of a population from its ancestral homes of several centuries.⁶ Moreover, the uprooting of the Balkan Muslims and their exodus into Anatolia also ignited the social and emotional feelings of the local Muslim population, which in effect amounted to a campaign to boycott the empire's Greek and Armenian merchants. This in itself was an indirect manifestation of interethnic friction and association by religion, which only added to the already existing interethnic rivalry in the eastern provinces of the empire. The Balkan catastrophes of 1912–13 can be considered the continuing manifestation of the Adana syndrome. This new causality of interethnic strife by now had become, by necessity, a peculiar characteristic of the new Ottoman constitutional era: the very essence of Ottomanism and the multiethnic character of the empire were at stake. Regardless of events during and after 1913, many historians now agree that the one constant is that a multiethnic Ottoman Empire was a thing of the past. Its place would be taken by something that many Turkists had been advocating for some time: a nation-state for the Turks.⁷ Zafer Toprak accordingly argues:

The Balkan War was a turning point as much for the history of the world as it was for the recent history of Turkey; it signified a major transformation. The birth of a national identity and its embrace by large masses were consequences of the Balkan War. Thus, in a certain sense, the "national struggle" in Turkey was initiated in 1912. The search for a national identity oriented toward a new political structure had emerged with the Balkan War. The loss of the Balkan territories had caused Turkish nationalism to come to the fore as a new national identity. Though they had

been reconciled until 1912, the "elements" of the Ottoman State had evolved into "national identities in conflict" after 1912 and the transition from the empire into a nation-state had instigated some form of "national homogeneity." Anatolia became part of the political discourse with the Balkan War; from then on the Turkish identity sought a resolution in Anatolia.⁸

To put it differently, Ottomanism had ended with the lingering carnage of the Balkan Wars, even though the CUP (or some segments within it) still upheld its virtues as the most important mortar to cement the different ethnic elements if the empire was to survive.

THE ARF (1909 TO 1914): RUSSIAN PROSECUTION VERSUS CUP "BENEVOLENCE"

As noted below, Russian agency is an important factor in explaining the intricate politics of this period. By arming the Kurdish tribes in its Iranian zone of influence and the eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire, the tsarist regime's modus operandi aimed at further weakening the infrastructure of the Ottoman state while at the same time pitting Armenians and Kurds against each other.

The ARF and to a certain degree the Social Democratic Hunchak Party had been at odds with the tsarist regime since its introduction of the decree for the confiscation of Armenian church properties in 1903. After much ado this issue was decided in favor of the Armenian community, with confiscated properties being returned.9 Moreover, both Armenian and Turkic (Tatar: the name used by British sources for the current Azeri) elements in the Caucasus were heavily involved in the 1905 Russian Constitutional Revolution that followed. Once the tsarist regime was able to suppress that movement, it concocted a punitive measure against both ethnic elements by pitting them against each other in what is known in history as the Armeno-Tatar (Azeri) clashes of 1905-6. Armenian political and paramilitary capital was concurrently heavily invested in the Iranian Constitutional Revolution that had started in 1906. This involvement intensified as a result of the Anglo-Russian accord of 1907, which divided Iran into northern (Russian) and southern (British) zones of influence, with the implicit agreement that Russia was to use its army to suppress the fledgling constitutional movement and restore the patrimonial monarchy in Persia.

The tsarist regime was now itself knee-deep in the Iranian turmoil. This necessitated the unleashing of Russian wrath against Armenian and Tatar political activists in the Caucasus by apprehending thousands of revolutionary cadres from both ethnic groups. At this juncture the Ottoman constitutional revolution of 1908 was hailed as a savior for the Armenian revolutionary movement. Most of the ARF and Hunchak cadres who eluded the tsarist police found safe haven in the Ottoman Empire.

Ottoman efforts to enlist separatist causes against Russia were not limited to Muslims but included Armenians and even Georgians and Ukrainians as well. To be sure, the CUP's fundamental commitment to holding the empire together under the banner of Ottomanism was more or less acceptable to the Christian and other minorities of the empire. Tactical considerations, however, guided the collaboration on both sides. But they never cut their ties with each other, and the two groups worked together even well into 1914. ¹⁰ According to Reynolds:

Ottoman collaboration with Armenian revolutionaries against the Russians had both passive and active components. The Ottomans, for example, permitted Armenian revolutionaries to carry out anti-Russian agitation on their soil. Armenian organizations in the capital and in Anatolia held fund raising drives to raise money for bail and lawyers for Armenians imprisoned by the Russians. At least one Ottoman Turkish newspaper, *İkdam*, contributed money in 1911 for the hiring of lawyers to defend twenty-one Ottoman Armenians charged with armed resistance to Tsarist authorities during and after the confiscation of Armenian church properties. Among parts of the Dashnaktsutyun in the Ottoman Empire anti-Russian feeling was very strong, and caused Russian diplomats considerable concern. 11

Therefore the question that asserts itself here is: how could such collaboration be dramatically altered as World War I started? The discussion below attempts to supply an answer to this archetypical question.

COVERING THE "RUSSIAN ANGLE"

Before delving into the issue of this clandestine ARF-CUP collaboration, an issue pertaining to the historiography of the period must be resolved. In his book *The Russian Origins of the First World War* Sean McMeekin

makes an apt statement about Armenian scholarship not covering the "Russian angle" vis-à-vis the Armenian Genocide of 1915:

In the case of Russia's role in the Armenian tragedy of 1915—a story that not only occurred in uncannily precise chronological parallel with Gallipoli, but was directly intertwined with it at its most critical stage—historians' neglect, while understandable, is less innocent. Because the still-raging controversy over the Armenian massacres of that year (or "genocide" as many now call it) has entered the arena of parliamentary debate and international law, it is a far more serious distortion of the truth to tell the Armenian tragedy of 1915 without reference (or with only passing reference) to Russia. 12

A significant part of McMeekin's chapter titled "Russia and the Armenians" deals with the period before World War I, so his reasoning here seems to have a gap in it. The devil lies in the details of what transpired in the prewar years. Why would McMeekin argue that Armenian historiography has not yet dealt exhaustively with the Russian angle during the war period before underlining that the period immediately preceding it needs to be examined first? This is especially true because most of the Russian archival materials that McMeekin uses show how the Russians built their case for the war and were finally able to cajole Armenians to stick by their side. To the best of my knowledge Armenian historiography has not tackled this issue. This chapter attempts to remedy that situation and to fill in the gap mentioned above.

McMeekin continues his argument by stating:

Many Soviet Armenian scholars, such as S.M. Akopyan, in Zapadnaia Armenia plankh imperialisticheshikh derzhav (1969) and A.O. Arutyunyan in Kavkazskii front 1914–1917 (1971), have thoroughly explored the Russian imperial context of the wartime Armenian deportations, but this is not generally true of Russian-Armenian writing on the "genocide" in western languages, who tend to downplay the Russian role in the story. A notable exception to this rule is Ronald Suny, in Armenia in the Twentieth Century (1983).... More representative of the general Armenian line today are the books of Vahakn Dadrian and (with some exceptions) Richard Hovannisian. In the History of the Armenian

Genocide (orig. 1995, six editions so far, and counting) Dadrian devotes all of six pages to Russia's role in the "Armenian Disaster"—and these cover the pre-World War I period exclusively.¹³

More specifically, McMeekin isolates Richard G. Hovannisian as the only Armenian scholar who dealt with Russian archival material in the 1960s but later let it slip into a "memory hole" of some sort:

In "The Armenian Question in the Ottoman Empire," his principal article in the volume he edited recently on The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times (2004), Hovannisian does provide a fairly extensive discussion of Russia's Armenian policy but again, only in the period preceding the First World War. It is not that Hovannisian does not know about the Russian angle in World War I—in fact, he covered this subject rather extensively forty years ago in "The Allies and Armenia, 1915-1918" (1968). Rather he seems to have let it all slip down the memory hole in his later works, after becoming something like an official spokesman for the Armenian cause in American academe.... For example, in The Armenian Genocide: History, Politics, Ethics (1992), edited by Hovannisian—a kind of compilation of state-of-the-art research on the subject at a time when a great deal of it was being produced—there are separate articles by fourteen different scholars, not a single one of which examines Russian policy toward the Armenians, as with at least one article (by Peter Holquist) in a forthcoming volume edited by Ronald Suny, Fatma Müge Göçek, and Norman Maimark, entitled A Question of Genocide: Armenians and Turks at the End of the Ottoman Empire (2011). From zero to one: a significant improvement.¹⁴

The answer to this complex statement is as complex as the statement itself. First and foremost, Armenian scholarship on many occasions, through written discourses and academic and nonacademic utterances from podiums and newspapers, has underlined the recalcitrance if not the outright responsibility of European powers such as Britain, France, and especially Germany and Russia for what happened to Armenians in 1915. The issue of French treachery in Cilicia in 1920 has been the subject of many studies. British abandonment after 1919 and betrayal in the case of Karabagh in 1920–21 is also widely addressed. Studies pertaining to

Russian and later Soviet deceit are available as well. ¹⁵ Moreover, the issue of the Russian angle or Russian agency, to be more precise, has been missing in Armenian scholarship because most Armenian scholars during the past decades have concentrated on the Armenian genocide process itself. This is especially true of the works of Richard G. Hovannisian. After writing Armenia on the Road to Independence in the late 1960s and completing the monumental effort of publishing four volumes on the First Republic of Armenia (1918–20), he has preoccupied himself with issues pertaining to the 1915 to 1923 period. What is more important in answering McMeekin's statement is that Hovannisian did his research in the Imperial Russian Archives during the 1960s. This was a time when Russian archival material was offered to academics through the filter of the Soviet regime. How can McMeekin be so certain that what he was able to discover just recently in the Russian Archives for the 1909-14 period is the same information that was offered to Hovannisian back in the 1960s? Even the Archives of the ARF, which might have offered a glimpse into such an angle, were not yet open to the public. 16 McMeekin's account in this case falls short in terms of its usage of Ottoman political and military archival material, let alone the absence of any pertinent Armenian sources.¹⁷ This study tries to bridge that gap.

ARF-CUP CLANDESTINE POLITICAL/MILITARY COLLABORATION IN IRAN: "THE IMPORTANT TASK"

The Ottomans provided the ARF with weapons, money, and legal protection through their consulates abroad. The focus of these joint Ottoman-ARF operations was in Iran. By backing Kurdish, Iranian, and Armenian insurgents, the Ottomans hoped to weaken Russian control over Iran and extend their influence in much the same way that the Russians were trying to do in the eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire. Thus Ottoman consulates in Hoy (Khoy in Armenian), Urmia, and Tabriz routinely provided assistance to the ARF. This included issuing Ottoman passports to Armenian revolutionaries and permitting them to fly Ottoman flags outside their residences, thereby providing them with immunity against Russian arrest. ¹⁸

The initial signs of a clandestine ARF-CUP military and political collaboration can be picked up in the printed section of the ARF Archives and the letters of Rostom (Stepan Zorian), one of the founding members of the ARF and the party's chief negotiator with the Iranian

revolutionaries since 1907. Rostom is significant because he can be characterized as the ARF organizational dynamo in the eastern provinces during the period.¹⁹

It so happens that a careful reading of the archival material published in volume 8 of the ARF Archives series yields some scanty but extremely important information about this ARF-CUP clandestine collaboration regarding the constitutional movement in Iran and in the eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire. A project code-named Garevor Kordz (Important Task) found in the ARF Archives best defines such a collaboration. Those who have worked at the ARF and other Armenian political party archives know that it is extremely hard to glean information regarding such secretive activities, because the ARF had the habit of referring to clandestine military operations as "dotted lines" in their meeting minutes and correspondence in general. Regardless, with some out-of-the-box thinking we can still extract the necessary information.

This Important Task was initiated and conducted during the period when Talat Bey was minister of the interior and continued during the ministry of Halil Bey:

The aim of the project was cooperation between the ARF and İttihad regarding Persia—a mixed body composed of representatives from the ARF, İttihad, and Persians was formed—Karapegov arrived at Van to coordinate the efforts, but he was later distanced from the project. On the other hand, İttihad's representative [in the joint coordinating body] Kadri Bey was acting on his own and without conferring with the ARF [see letters from Van regarding Kadri Bey's stance toward the ARF].²¹

The existence of this collaboration is also corroborated through a report by British consul general, Capt. Bertram Dickson from Van, to his superior in Constantinople, ambassador Sir Gerard Augustus Lowther:

Regarding [the] departure of Nadji [Naci] Bey and his band of volunteers for Salmas [Salmast] to aid the Persian Constitutionalists, I now learn that the real Chief of this band is a certain Halil Bey, from Salonika; Nadji Bey is more of a propagandist than a fighter.... So far as I can make out, Halil's attention is a sort of a "balloon d'essai" on the part of the Salonika Committee of Union and Progress. If it is successful, then larger affairs will be undertaken; at present, however, it is not certain what view the Caucasus

Revolutionaries will take, and those being at present at the head of affairs, may not be supposed to surrender their lead to the Turks.²²

The Kurdish tribes in the theater of war had been lured by the Russians, as can be surmised from a document by ambassador Lowther to British foreign minister Edward Grey. It stresses that Kurdish tribal chiefs from the eastern provinces (Van and Erzurum) had fled to Persia and that more were on their way to Maku, which at the time served as a bastion for the gathering of anticonstitutionalist, monarchist forces in Iran.²³

As noted above, the Unionists' program of modernization and unity involved:

the principle of equal rights for all Ottoman subjects regardless of religion. To the Kurds this principle meant the favoring of Christian Ottomans at their expense. As the European dominated global market and foreign investment began to penetrate into Eastern Anatolia and undermine the position of the Kurdish land-holding elite and to promise greater prosperity to the Armenian and Assyrian Christians, the Unionists' project of political modernization and centralization was simultaneously stripping Kurdish tribal leadership of the political privileges they had gained under Sultan Abdulhamid II.²⁴

The rest of the history of ARF involvement in the Persian Constitutional Revolution is picked up by Rostom (Stepan Zorian), a founding member of the ARF who had acted as the party's chief negotiator with the Persian constitutionalists from 1907 onward. In a letter to his comrades in Tbilisi Rostom, who at the time was in Dilman on his way to Salmast, writes:

This is how the Dilman incident took place:

Emmioghlu [literally paternal cousin, nom de guerre of a Persian revolutionary leader] came on Thursday and visited us on Friday. He said that he is convinced that they [the Persian revolutionaries] should change their politics toward Dajgasdan [the Ottoman Empire]. Said al-Memalik, who had come with the latter, entertained the same idea.

On Saturday we visited them in Dilman. Emmioghlu was invited over by the [Ottoman] Consul.... The consul seems to have politely listened to him.... However, he suddenly called upon the

[Ottoman] colonel and soldiers and ordered them to unarm Emmioghlu and to take him into custody. As soon as this was heard, Persian revolutionary fighters surrounded the consul's house and prepared to fight. The issue was settled due to the efforts of Garabet of Van. What had happened was strange since (1) Emmioghlu was on good terms with the Ottoman consul; (2) he had been invited to the latter's home; and (3) Dilman was a stronghold of Persian revolutionary forces.

Samson [Harutyunian], Sadr al-Islam, and Mehmet Ali Agha of Mashhad sent word to the consul and made him realize the danger behind in his action.²⁵ The consul informed them that he regretted what he had done and wanted to mend relations. The issue was thus resolved. I must add that the incident, the details of which are not yet fully comprehended by us, was the result of the consul's order for 50 [Ottoman] soldiers to take a post at the city door and not to let the *nizamieh* [Persian revolutionary bands] enter the city [Dilman]. There was gunfire.... The mujahids [Persian revolutionary fighters] opened fire in turn, and the skirmish continued late into the night. Six Ottoman soldiers were killed, of whom two were wounded but could not make it through. Seven Ottoman soldiers were wounded, while seventeen were taken captive [according to some news, thirty were taken captive]. The constitutionalists had three deaths. The fighters [mujahids] left the city toward morning. No one knows where they were headed.

When the fight started, we were in Ghalasar [Kal'asar]. The telephone was not working.... Keri [Arshak Kavafian] went to Dilman with some of his fighters. In the morning we went to Dilman too. The city dwellers were still in panic, because they had heard that the [Kurdish] tribes were on the move.... The [Ottoman] consul had a bad headache and we didn't visit with him for long. He met with the colonel and told him that any raid by the Kurdish tribes was unwelcome.... Persia is a destitute country, and it's unfortunate that the Dilman incident was associated with the whims of an Ottoman official.²⁶

Aside from the information supplied in Rostom's letter, what is important here is that Dilman was a center for Ottoman collusion with the Armenian and Iranian revolutionaries. Moreover, the actions of the Ottoman consul general in Dilman show that the Ottoman authorities were pursuing a policy of aiding Armenian and Iranian revolutionaries.²⁷

Yet what was the aim of the Ottoman government in being entangled with such clandestine anti-Russian operations? It is clear that after the 1908 revolution Ottoman foreign policy was based on the notion of using Muslim and Christian populations to weaken Russian penetration into Iran and concomitantly hinder Russian-Kurdish collusion in north-western Iran and the eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire. Hence Armenian political/revolutionary organizations and especially the ARF could perform an important role in the Ottoman efforts to enlist separatist causes against Russia.

While this ARF-CUP collaboration took shape, the Russian army was already on the move. Russian troops were being deployed in the Iranian theater of war through Kilan-Enzeli (Port Arthur) on the southern shore of the Caspian Sea, much to the chagrin of the local Armenian and Tatar populations of the area. They even boycotted the Russian army by closing down their shops in the bazaar of the port city for three full days. Moreover, the Port Arthur ARF Committee (a subcommittee of the more populous Salmast ARF Committee) was instrumental in feeding the ARF fighters in Iran with intelligence and logistical information regarding the Russian army being deployed through their port city at a time when the Armenian fighting force of Yeprem Khan was on the verge of taking over Ghazvin:²⁹

April 25, 1909

ARF Kilan-Enzeli [Port Arthur] Committee

Yeprem Khan's forces [Armenian brigade in the Iranian constitutional revolution] took over Ghazvin on April 11/24.... there are eighty Russian army elements in the area up to Rashd as well as two Russian military ships in the bay.

ARF Minaret Committee: Gharib³⁰

This was happening at a time when the shah's weary forces were pushed south and were desperately trying to defend Tehran against Yeprem Khan and other Iranian mujahid forces:

June 29, 1909

...the shah's forces are preparing to defend Tehran. Taparagan's forces are already near the city.

ARF Minaret Committee:

Vrtsin³¹

Several days later Rostom was already at "Minaret" (ARF code name for Salmast) in Persia. In his second letter to his comrades in Tbilisi Rostom mentions that Ottoman (CUP) fighters were also traveling with his group. After writing about the fight for Tabriz and how the Russians came in when Sbahan (Isfahan), Ghazvin (Qazvin), and Rashd had already risen in rebellion and Tabriz was preparing to resist, he stated that the Russian interference was a big blow to the Iranian constitutional cause. He further asserted that the Russian invasion was not a surprise: he had heard several intelligence reports from ARF bodies cautioning that the Russians were just waiting for the moment when the shah was about to lose so that they could interfere and appear as the saviors of the monarchy. Rostom continues:

The Ottomans never fulfilled what they had promised.... One day I was called upon by the Armenian prelate and found out that the Russian consul general was there.... He told me that the mujahids are a real threat to peace and tranquillity for all European powers in Persia.... I categorically declined such an assertion regarding the revolutionaries. I also told him that a new raid by the monarchists would endanger the Armenian quarter of the city [Salmast] and that we will if necessary fight.... He promised to go and speak with Sattar Khan and persuade him not to attack.... The next day the battle of Sham Kazan took place.... Next we witnessed the entry of the Russian Army into the city.... The anjoman and the mujahids are scattered around the countryside. At least we are happy to know that other areas of Persia are under the constitutionalists' control. We hope that someday Aderbadagan [in northwestern Iran] will also be liberated.³²

The constitutionalist forces were able to retake Tabriz and declare the formation of a new Majlis, as is apparent in Rostom's next letter, addressed to Yeprem Khan. After congratulating Yeprem Khan for a job well done, Rostom asks him to write a detailed report vis-à-vis the Iranian constitutional revolution and send it to Azadamard. It is clear from the letter that Rostom is more interested in the precise role that the ARF had played in the victory at Tabriz. Moreover, as soon as Tabriz was taken Yeprem Khan was appointed as the chief of police there. Rostom was initially worried that assuming such a position would tie up Yeprem Khan at a time when his military knowledge and acumen were needed elsewhere.³³ It seems that Rostom later reversed his thinking regarding

Yeprem Khan's new position, since the Tatar revolutionaries Aghayev (Ahmet Bey Ağaoğlu) and Karabek Karabekov (aka Karabeyli) insisted on it.³⁴

Rostom probably left Salmast in the summer or fall of 1909 and came to Van at a time when Russian army units had taken over Hoy and Urmia. In this atmosphere Rostom mentions for the first time in one of his letters that the situation in Iran could lead to an outright Russo-Ottoman war: "News from Salmast is not good. The Russians have already entered Hoy, Urmia.... If the Turkish military remains in its place inside [the] Persian border, a Russian-Ottoman conflagration is very possible." 35

In a lengthy letter from Salmast the local ARF committee informed the party regarding the activities in the region for 1908–9. Of particular interest is the section that details the activities of the Ottoman consul general in Salmast:

At the time the Ottoman consul, Hami Bey [sic: Hamit Bey] was preoccupied with his intrigues...so as to put the [Iranian] constitutionalists in an awkward situation [see below]. He encouraged Semko [more frequently known as Simko],³⁶ who had been isolated in Kotur after leaving Salmast, to come down from the mountains and to harass the villages in the Hoy area.... We were aware that Semko was also colluding with the anticonstitutionalists.... We entered into negotiations with the Ottoman consul through Comrade Samson. Samson asked him to try to persuade Semko to take his fighters and to return to the mountains. He, however, answered back that he has no bearing on Semko.... Thus we had to call all our [ARF] fighting groups to Salmast in order to defend that area.³⁷

It seems that the ARF tried to persuade the Ottoman consul a second time regarding Simko. This second request was to no avail either: the consul promised to look into the matter but did nothing tangible in that regard. The letter then speaks about the Young Turks who were fighting for the constitutional movement in the area:

Now a few words regarding the Young Turks, the Ottoman consul, and in general the Ottoman forces on the border passes and their actions in regard to the constitutional movement. In mid-February 1909 Najip Bey Mirza Said [Said Bey Memalik of Dilman] came to us with a group of Young Turk [fighters]. They

had recommendations from our comrades in Erzurum. Najip Bey's and Mirza Said's vouching for them was enough for us to accept them in our midst. They had brought with them 50 rifles and around 30,000 bullets from Vaspuragan—of which we were given only 1,500. However, they treated us in a very formal manner from the beginning.... They wanted to stay aloof. Comrade Vahap [Arshak Vramian, member of ARF Eastern Bureau and later deputy to the Ottoman parliament from Van] had alerted us that their [the CUP's] intention was to isolate the ARF from the Iranian movement.³⁸

The letter then explains how the CUP fighters underwent a metamorphosis while in Iran and after participating in several skirmishes:

At first they were very motivated and showed it. However, after the fighting in Hasharut, where they had one death and several wounded and had their first interaction with the mujahidin and saw how the latter deserted the fighting, they lost hope and were under the complete influence of the [Ottoman] consul general.... The consul had other aims.... By this time Ottoman forces had crossed the border and created a zone of influence inside Persia, which was viewed very negatively by the Iranian Constitutionalist Movement.... The Ottomans were assuring the constitutionalists that their army was there to support them.... We tried to persuade Said Bey Memalik that no matter what [happens] we have to keep cordial relations with the Young Turks, since their presence means that more arms and ammunition can come to us. However, Said Bey was so adamant in his stance and his negative attitude toward the Young Turks that they left at the end of March 1909.

ARF Minaret [Salmast-Hoy] Committee:

Tsolag, Krist, Garegin, Samson

June 30, 1909

Minaret³⁹

The situation in Iran, coupled with the Adana Massacres in April of 1909, had put the ARF on alert. Rostom was called to Constantinople to consult with ARF leaders regarding what future steps must be taken visà-vis relations with the CUP. Once again Aghayev and Karabekov lent a helping hand in the matter:

We are not having any meetings with Ittihad. The only relations we are conducting are with İttihadist officials in the government. We might write a letter to the CUP Salonika headquarters and ask them how the relations should be regulated.... There are internal divisions within the İttihadists.... The Ahrars are not organized. Nevertheless, the situation is unstable.... We are in negotiations with Aghayev and Karabekov. We have decided to publish a Turkish-Armenian monthly newspaper consisting of sixteen pages. It would be devoted to solidarity and consensus between Turkey [the Ottoman Empire], the Caucasus, and Iran. Even if it doesn't have a huge success, it won't hurt, since it's not going to cost us a lot. However, in the event that it thrives—even if we distribute 1,000 copies of it—it will definitely have its benefits.... We are also meeting weekly with the other Armenian political parties. At this juncture, however, we are just passing time. 41

By December 1909 it had already been decided that a joint ARF-CUP editorial committee was to publish the above-mentioned newspaper in Erzurum. The publication was to serve as the nexus of solidarity between Christians and Muslims. The editorial team would consist of one member each from the CUP, the ARF, and the Caucasian Tatar revolutionaries. The language was to be simple and able to be understood by Turks in the Ottoman Empire as well as in Transcaucasia and Iran.⁴²

Throughout this period the ebb and flow of events in Iran always troubled Rostom. In April 1912 the fortunes of the constitutional movement in Iran were all but hopeless. Russian military might had finally succeeded in silencing the revolutionary movement there. Rostom writes:

I wrote to Yeprem Khan several days ago. He must have received my letter.... They wrote to us from Constantinople regarding the expedition against Salat ul Dovleh. Knowing that the latter is not giving the population time to breathe, we opined that our comrades should participate in the action against him in a different manner. The problem is that our fighters have not yet left Iran, even though the time has come for them to relocate to this side of the border. Regardless of our stance, we [the ARF] will be blamed for any action against the reactionaries,...we can only envisage events there since we are not fully informed of the situation on the ground. We hope that you will make a decision that will be

beneficial to our cause. We need you to give us a full assessment about Salat ul Dovleh and his role in the events. Last year three people crossed the border from the Ottoman Empire into Iran. One of them was the doctor, Karabekov (who is now in Baku), the other two were devoted İttihadist officers who frequently met with us. However, we later heard that these two officers had aided Salat ul Dovleh in organizing his expedition. When one of those officers returned to Erzurum and we asked him how they were involved in such an action, he put the blame on Karabekov.... We were also lately informed that Salat ul Dovleh is now living under the protection of the Ottoman Embassy in Tehran. We really wish to have more information regarding this.⁴³

Armenian revolutionary activity within Iran was not devoid of intra-Armenian rivalry and competition. In a letter addressed to the ARF Western Bureau Rostom is upset that the Social Democrat Hunchak Party (SDHP) segment of Tabriz had presented an application for membership to the Second Socialist International. How could this be, when the ARF, which had an office in the heart of Europe, in Geneva, had not yet presented its application to the same body so that the ARF rather than the Hunchaks would have the voting member privilege of the Armenians? Rostom further explains that at the time he was in Tabriz the SDHP was fractured. The cadres coming from outside (the Caucasus) were not only Hunchaks but also Social Revolutionaries and nonparty fighters. The Caucasus Turkish Revolutionary Committee in Tbilisi, however, had insisted that they could only go if they registered as Hunchaks. The Turkish Committee wanted to involve Hunchaks in order to balance the ARF participation in the Iranian Constitutional Movement and also to incite animosity between the two Armenian parties. 44

By May 1912 Rostom had received news that Yeprem Khan had been killed in an ambush, which probably was the result of a conspiracy by agents of Salat ul Dovleh.⁴⁵ Rostom presents the last episode of Armenian withdrawal from Iran:

Our operational finale in Iran was a sad one indeed. Today several mujahids came here through [Nikol] Tuman and Samson Khan crossed the border [from Iran into Ottoman Empire] with some twenty-five Armenian fighters. ⁴⁶ It seems that we [ARF] didn't officially take part in the final battle [in Iran] due to orders received in that regard from Yeprem Khan in Tehran. That order might have been of importance, since the problem was that had we

participated the whole blame would have been shouldered by our fighters. Had we participated in the battle, that would have been an important element for the Russians and the Mollas to start an anti-Armenian campaign.⁴⁷

Rostom lamented the failure of the revolutionary movement in Iran, which practically also meant an end of Armenian revolutionary activity there. For him the best line of action was to relocate Armenian fighting units within the borders of the Ottoman Empire:

I have no news from Yeprem.... There were two letters from him [Yeprem] and Mirzaian, where they write about Tuzi Zade's position. The two of them don't agree with my idea that they should work with Tuzi Zade.... Poor Sattar Khan! Our comrades committed a big mistake by letting Sattar Khan plunge into such a situation, especially by participating in the attack. My only hope is that maybe Keri abstained and hopefully Yeprem acted through the Bakhtiaries.⁴⁸

Rostom wrote:

Some of the ARF fighters have reached Van, but not all. Thus far we are unable to know what happened in Tabriz, and what the condition of our comrades is. A telegram from Van indicates that our comrades have reached there and are safe. No news about Honan [Tavitian], Bionian, Sarkis [of Van], and the Stepans. One of those executed [in Iran] was an Armenian. We couldn't verify his identity. I think he is most probably the Armenian member of the Tabriz *anjoman* [local revolutionary committee].⁴⁹

One of the most important factors that motivated the ARF in entering the Iranian constitutional quagmire was the protection of the Armenian communities on the northwestern border strip (Julfa, Maku, Hoy, Salmast, Urmia), so Rostom was fearful that with the demise of the constitutional forces the Russian-backed Kurdish tribes would wreak havoc in the area:

One thing is very simple; The [Iranian] governmental mechanism is on the verge of destruction or is utterly destroyed. Moreover, one faction's actions are sabotaged by another faction. It is

because of this that the government is unable to succeed in any of its endeavors. The initiative is in the hands of the reactionary elements. We must also underline the fact that the local governments are in the hands of those reactionary elements.... If the Russian forces do take control of the Hoy-Salmast line, the Simkos will wreak havoc upon the [Armenian] population. It is for this reason that the reactionaries are not hiding their affection toward the Russians.⁵⁰

As noted, the support of the CUP for ARF activities in Iran had taken an active form since 1909. In 1910 Russian authorities arrested an Armenian named Poghos Vaganian (hereafter Vahanian, which is the correct spelling of the name) for carrying out operations for the ARF in the region of Novocherkassk. Vahanian was a member of the ARF Tbilisi Central Committee who had represented the party's Eastern Bureau (at the time still based in Tbilisi) at the party's Fourth General Congress, held in Vienna in 1907. Vahanian was also in possession of Ottoman citizenship. It was on this basis that the Ottoman ambassador in St. Petersburg, Turhan Paşa, intervened on his behalf. He asked that the Russians release Vahanian and allow him to return to his homeland. The Russians rejected the ambassador's petition and refused to let Vahanian go free. ⁵¹

When the Russian authorities in Hoy detained an ARF member, Ovanes Parumov (aka Iapon Karabakhsky) in March 1912 for assassinating a Russian colonel named Ron Burkatsky in Yerevan, they found they were unable to extradite him. Karabakhsky was carrying an Ottoman passport, and the Ottoman consul refused to permit his extradition. ⁵²

The Ottoman *şehbender* (consul) in Hoy, Saadulla Bey, was also alleged to be overseeing the use of experienced Armenian fighters arriving from the Caucasus for training and leading cells of local subversives. The saboteurs stockpiled explosives in and around the towns of Salmast and Hoy. They were able to find refuge with members of the ARF, who were known to be working with the CUP.⁵³ Moreover, up to seventy ARF and CUP revolutionaries were taking refuge at the Ottoman consulate in the northern Iranian city of Tabriz in the spring of 1912. During the day these revolutionaries moved about the city accompanied by personnel wearing the badge of the Turkish consulate.⁵⁴

Russian pressure did yield some results. At the end of March 1912 Saadulla Bey began to withdraw support from the Armenians and Iranians on orders from Istanbul. Soon thereafter he was recalled from Iran after three years of service. The removal of Saadulla Bey, however, evidently

did not put a complete end to the Ottoman cooperation with the ARF. Later that summer the Russian Foreign Ministry protested to the Porte that a "tide of armed Armenians" had been pouring into Iran from the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman border posts were allowing them to pass freely with their weapons on their way to create havoc in Iran.⁵⁵

According to Russian consul Olferiev:

What makes these incidents interesting is not simply the fact that the Ottoman government was arming an organization whose revolutionary activities it feared, the Dashnaktsutyun, but also that the Dashnaktsutyun should have chosen to work with the Ottomans.... Two other Armenian revolutionary organizations, the Hunchak and Ramgavar parties, suspected the Dashnaks of working with the CUP. Although the Russian consul Olferiev doubted this since the Dashnaks in Van were openly agitating against the government, relations between the Dashnaks and the other Armenian organizations were tense enough to cause armed clashes. Notably, this did not worry Olferiev, who thought it just as well that the Armenians feud amongst themselves rather than direct their energies against Russia. ⁵⁶

Even though there might be a kernel of truth in the idea that the Ottomans were in favor of a constitutional regime in Persia and that they aided the rebels, Rostom was cognizant that the Ottoman government had ulterior motives. In fact what Constantinople was trying to achieve through its military forces on and in some cases inside the border with Persia was to incorporate the border strip of Julfa, Maku, Hoy, Salmast, and Urmia into its own realm. This meant that the Armenian communities of Persia, which were concentrated in those areas, would come under direct Ottoman dominion.

ARF-CUP COLLABORATION IN THE EASTERN VILAYETS AND THE KURDS

As noted earlier, the ARF continued its political cooperation with the CUP regardless of what transpired in Adana in April 1909. The two parties also signed agreements in 1909 and 1910. They even created a joint body to oversee the implementation of the points of the agreements. The experiment was partially successful, especially regarding the return of lands grabbed by Kurdish chieftains during the Hamidian era.⁵⁷

Although Armenian-Kurdish friendship was cemented at the beginning of the Second Constitutional era with the intention of solving the acute agrarian issue of land grabs, the camaraderie did not last for long. Moreover, the abolition of the Hamidiye cavalry units was a big factor in antagonizing the Kurds against the CUP and the Armenians. Kurdish tribal chiefs simply could not digest that the central government was acting as an agent for Armenians with regard to the land issue and was prosecuting Kurds for land grabs retroactively.

While Constantinople and other cities were enjoying the fruits of the newly established constitutional regime, they had not yet made their way into the eastern vilayets of the empire. For instance, when Rostom traveled to Van from Salmast (probably in the summer of 1909), he reported that "the Ottoman constitution has not yet reached Van, where old *derebeys* [literally valley beys, generally meaning autonomous lords] still rule.... Whatever is ceded is temporary, and the old regime people are hiding behind the masks of İttihadists." Rostom seemed to be cognizant that many of the reactionary cadres of the ancien régime would find their way into the CUP, just because it was lucrative to do so. Rostom went so far as to argue that the CUP might soon fracture precisely because many reactionaries were now swelling its ranks. 62 Rostom argued:

We also have to study our position regarding Russia in the case of a war starting up. Will the other parties [in the Caucasus] be able to muster the same zeal and force that they had during the 1905–6 [constitutional] movement?...On the other hand, regardless of war being declared or not, the internal condition in the Ottoman Empire is very dangerous, which is a very big threat for the Armenians.... Kurdish unrest is noticeable in the area [the eastern provinces]. Kör Hüseyin Paşa is not sitting idle. The son of Bedirhan Bey [Abdürrezak Bedirhan] has already crossed the border into Iran and is negotiating with the Kurdish chieftains in the border area.... It would be wise if our comrades escaping from Iran could lose their tracks. The same applies to the Persian fighters as well.⁶³

Simko was in contact with other Kurdish nationalists such as Abdürrezak Bedirhan and Seyyed Taha Gilani (grandson of Sheikh Ubeydullah Nahri, who had revolted against Iran in the 1880s). Seyyed Taha was a Kurdish nationalist who was conducting propaganda among the Iranian Kurds. He was also aware of international geopolitics and modern nationalism. In one of his letters to the Iranian authorities he talks about

the right of self-rule and autonomy for the Kurds and compares Kurdish demands with similar demands of other nationalities in Europe. He even goes so far as to envision a union of Iranian Kurdistan with Turkish (Ottoman) Kurdistan as the nexus of an independent Kurdish state. 64

Ever the pessimist, Rostom once again underlines his fear that the Iranian issue would explode into a regional conflict and that Russia might declare war on the Ottoman Empire as early as spring of 1911. He bases his analysis on news that many Kurdish tribes were already in collusion with the Russians, which necessitated a strong ARF-CUP collaboration. The Ottoman authorities in the eastern provinces were hopelessly puzzled: instead of subduing the rebellious Kurds, they were trying their old game of winning them over:

The Kurds are continuing openly to arm themselves. News about establishing a Kurdish authority is not unsubstantiated. They are the best instrument in the hands of the Russians to create unstable conditions in these areas [eastern provinces]. The Russians are systematically working to arm the Kurds, thus creating disarray in the area. The situation will therefore become like that in Aderbadagan [northwestern Iran], where Simko terrorized the population. Under such conditions, the people will have no other choice but to accept a strong Russian presence in the area for security reasons.... On the other hand, our local [Ottoman] authority's actions are really puzzling. Sometimes it feels as if they are totally hopeless and don't know what to do. There is no plan of action.... Their policy of winning over the Kurds is the outcome of their hopelessness. Deep inside they know that the Kurds will move to the Russian side at the first opportune moment.⁶⁵

Accordingly, Rostom suggested an Ottoman-Armenian cooperation and a plan to arm Armenians in order to balance the Kurdish menace:

We must again insist that arming the Armenians is an important issue. Let what happened in Iran be an important lesson to the Ottomans. At least if the [Kurdish] tribal chieftains see that they won't remain unpunished for their looting expeditions they will show some restraint in their actions.... We are anxiously waiting for you to come to some sort of a new agreement with İttihad over there [Constantinople].⁶⁶

Thus it is obvious that Russia was arming the Kurdish tribes for three reasons: (1) to stop the cooperation between the CUP and the ARF; (2) to keep the Kurdish tribes under tsarist control so that it could use them against the Ottomans and if necessary against the Armenians; and (3) to create insecurity among the Armenians so that they would look toward Russia for protection.

THE ARF SIXTH AND SEVENTH GENERAL CONGRESSES, 1911 AND 1913

The ARF Sixth General World Congress convened in 1911 in the Azadamard building in Constantinople. The congress came in the wake of the ARF-CUP meeting of February 1911, which included a heated debate concerning the troubling situation in the eastern provinces. It must be noted that the ARF was under extreme political persecution in the Caucasus by the tsarist regime. Many of the high level cadres of the Eastern Bureau of the party were in prison, while others had gone into hiding underground. Hence only those eastern Armenian leaders who were already in the Ottoman Empire were present at the meeting. Internal political conditions in the Ottoman Empire were the most important issue on the agenda of the meeting. The major deliberations can be summed up in the following points:

- I. Regarding CUP-ARF relations and based on reports received from the provinces, the congress saw no meaningful reason for the continuation of relations. What had transpired thus far had no tangible result on the ground in terms of the "agrarian issue" and the physical protection of Armenian communities in the eastern provinces.
- 2. Self-defense: this was necessitated due to Kurdish incursions and state officials' insipid attitude toward the issue in general.
- 3. Promises that the constitutional regime would change things did not materialize.
- 4. A modern Ottoman Empire did not materialize. This meant that the new constitutional state envisioned being formed on the tenets of Ottomanism, equality, and some sort of autonomy for the eastern provinces could not be expected.
- 5. The CUP had tilted toward reactionary, religious, and more nationalist politics.
- 6. Ottomanism, as understood as an ideology that would amalgamate the citizenry of the empire on the basis of equality among all citizens, was no longer a possibility to the Armenians.

- 7. Turkism was now becoming more underlined as an ideology of the ruling elite.
- 8. The Salonika agreement after the 1909 Adana Massacres remained on paper only.
- 9. These changes transformed the CUP in such a way that it did not view the Armenian element of the empire as a friendly component needed for strengthening the constitutional regime.
- 10. Therefore it was about time to give the CUP a final chance to amend its politics and reestablish its collaborative stance with the ARF. In other words, it was time to focus on the leftist arm of the CUP and try to forge an alliance if possible.⁶⁷

After much discussion and deliberation the congress decided the following:

- I. To inform the CUP through an official communiqué of the issues cited above in order to strengthen the cooperation between the two parties and to find solutions to the issues that Armenians were facing in the eastern provinces of the empire (pertaining specifically to land tenure and physical security).
- 2. To empower the ARF Western Bureau to sever ties with the CUP if the CUP did disregard the ARF demands.
- 3. To make the severing of relations public so that Armenians would know about it.
- 4. To urge the ARF to fight politically through its bloc in the Ottoman parliament against the CUP if it acted in an anti-Armenian manner.
- 5. To have the ARF parliamentary bloc members take a critical stance toward the CUP and the government within the parliament.⁶⁸

The ARF Western Bureau had explicitly demanded that the congress entrust it with the ability to sever relations with the CUP. It got exactly what it wanted.⁶⁹

The ARF Seventh World General Congress was held in 1913 in Erzurum. The most important issue that the delegates raised was the Western Bureau's severance of its ties with the CUP, a decision with which some leaders like Rostom and others were not content. Suffice it to say that, regardless of the severing of ties, meetings with the CUP members and the government continued. The congress also discussed issues pertaining to the agrarian conditions and Armenian lands still in Kurdish possession. Moreover, the issue of security and self-defense of Armenians

in the eastern provinces against Kurdish rebellions was also on the agenda of the congress.⁷¹

KURDISH REBELLIONS, 1912 TO 1914

If one thing characterizes the events in the eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire during the period 1912 to 1914 it would definitely be the Kurdish rebellions that ravaged the area and caused much hardship for Armenians. In fact the beginning of Kurdish unrest can be traced back to almost the beginning of the new constitutional era, when the issue of equality of Christians and Muslims and hence the issue of Kurdish usurpation of Armenian lands (the "agrarian question") demanded a comprehensive solution. In this sense the Adana Massacres were a direct manifestation of the growing Muslim irritation vis-à-vis the agrarian demands brought forth by the ARF. According to Reynolds:

A cornerstone of both the Unionists' program of modernization and unity was the principle of equal rights for all Ottoman subjects regardless of religion. To the Kurds this principle meant the favoring of Christian Ottomans at their expense. As the European dominated global market and foreign investment began to penetrate into Eastern Anatolia and undermine the position of the Kurdish land-holding elite and to promise greater prosperity to the Armenian and Assyrian Christians, the Unionists' project of political modernization and centralization was simultaneously stripping Kurdish tribal leadership of the political privileges they had gained under Sultan Abdülhamid II.⁷²

As Janet Klein assesses in her dissertation, this enigmatic agrarian issue was at the core of Armenian-Kurdish animosity during the period after 1908. Simply put, even with the best intentions of Kurdish Young Turk members such as Abdülrahman Bedirhan, events in the eastern provinces did not go the way such leaders envisioned. Even the Bedirhan clan was divided and Abdürrezak Bey's assumption of the leadership of the Bedirhan tribe (or most of it: see below) transformed the issue into an unfathomable one:

The matter of usurped Armenian lands was actually one of the most outstanding (even if not well studied) issues that spurred Armenians to action. Furthermore, this research also suggests that the violence protested by Armenians...was often closely linked to the land question, even if this connection has not to date been widely acknowledged. Lastly,...Armenians were not the only [ones] campaigning in the region. A number of Kurdish peasants [had] lost their lands to Kurdish Aghas, many of whom were affiliated with the same Hamidiye [cavalry units] in the same manner and [Kurdish peasants] fought for their restoration.⁷³

The conjecture that Kurdish insurgency in this period aimed at something more than keeping the preconstitutional period status quo intact seems more likely. Aside from the land issue, was there a Kurdish national cognizance regarding the creation of an autonomous Kurdistan on the model of Albania or Arabia? No single answer to this question exists.⁷⁴

Some Kurdish leaders, like Abdürrezak Bedirhan (grandson of the legendary rebel Bedirhan of the 1850s), encouraged through Russian intrigue, might have envisioned such an accomplishment and might have attracted some Kurdish tribal chieftains to rally around them for such a cause. Bedirhan's movement was an important one because of the participation of other important Kurdish chieftains in it, including Kör Hüseyin Paşa (himself the grandson of another Kurdish rebel leader, Sheikh Ubeydullah) and Simko, the leader of the Shikak Kurdish tribe that had domains in the eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire as well as in northwestern Iran (Urmia), which made him enormously important for tsarist schemes.⁷⁵

Yet for most Kurdish tribal chiefs the centuries-old practice of marauding had been the norm. They were ready to take up arms and even be in cahoots with Russia for the sake of preserving their tribal way of life and superiority over their Christian neighbors.⁷⁶

The issue of Kurdish mutiny began when the First Balkan War came to an end. The timing was significant, because Russia's aim was to create unsecure conditions in the Ottoman east:

When the First Balkan War seemed to herald the final end to Ottoman rule, the Russians swung into action. In a 28 November 1912 directive, [Sergei] Sazonov [Russian minister of foreign affairs] instructed Russian consuls in eastern Turkey to work toward a unification of Kurdish tribes against the beleaguered Ottomans. Tiflis command also took a hand, sending four Russian military officers, disguised as nomadic tribesmen, across the Turkish border to incite the Kurds against the government.⁷⁷

In yet another letter Rostom continues his line of thinking:

Sheikh Mahmud [Barzani], who roamed northern Mesopotamia, "placed himself and [his] Kurds at Russia's disposition" in February 1913. Abdurrezak Bey, a Kurd from the prestigious Bedirhan clan who had served as an Ottoman diplomat in St. Petersburg, made a vow of fidelity to the Russian consul in Bitlis early in March [1913].⁷⁸

The situation in Van was deteriorating. According to the Van ARF Central Committee: "Relations with the İttihad are not good. The reason is the reactionary elements who are the CUP leaders here. Our arming for self-defense purposes has completely stopped. The Russian government is arming Kurds [Abdul Rıza Khan and his tribe] and the government is doing nothing regarding that even though it might be a problem for it in the future." Moreover, "Kurdish unrest has also been the result of taxes being imposed on them by the Ottoman authorities in Van. This has already enraged the Kurdish tribal leader Sheikh Said Bey, who, at the head of a band 200 men strong, has already declared that he would fight to the end against the government." 80

Facing such a Kurdish menace and based on suggestions received from its central committees in the eastern provinces, the ARF Constantinople Responsible Body ruled that the ARF should form "Villagers' Defense Teams" and supply weapons to the villagers to defend themselves. Rostom was utterly against such an idea. He insisted that the ARF should not act as the arms supplier and that it was the government's responsibility to supply the necessary weapons. Moreover, in a letter to Simon Zavarian, Rostom wrote about more gloomy days that he saw on the horizon:

The situation in the Ottoman Empire is generally complex. The country is going—more precisely they are taking it—to a situation similar to Iran. Even though the army officers have the best of intentions, they don't feel that their actions will cause the complete deterioration of the state apparatus, which, in turn, will invite foreign intervention. I am afraid if the internal struggle within the [İttihadist] factions continues, the country will go toward lawlessness and chaos.... I was really afraid that the change of government might lead to internal strife. It seems that that won't happen at this time.... I was in Mush [Mus] when I received the news

[about the change of government].... There is no doubt that the new cabinet will try to strengthen its position by appointing its loyal followers to administrative positions. Thus the government becomes a coalition [itilafname in Ottoman parlance] one, even though it won't carry that name. The İttihadists will thus prepare to defend themselves. The problem is that the government will rely on the reactionary elements to strengthen its position. This will lead to more internal divisions and lawlessness in the provinces.... The Kurds are restless in Van and the government is doing nothing about it.⁸²

The difference in opinion regarding the CUP and the ARF's relations with it is clearly evident in another letter from Rostom to the ARF Western Bureau. We must bear in mind that the Western Bureau in Constantinople was contemplating severing relations with the CUP. Rostom was totally against such a step and made it quite clear in a letter he wrote to Mikayel Varandian: "I am really amazed at your optimism.... New evidence suggests that the country is going toward lawlessness.... Until now there was one government within the government: the İttihad. Hereafter there will be several. This is the result of the change in the cabinet." Rostom's fears were not baseless. The Kurds were just waiting for such a political quagmire in the capital in order to spread their mutiny through their new ally, Russia:

It seems the Kurds were waiting. They were waiting for the return of the Shari^ca law. They want to pretend that they are friends with the Armenians, but on the other hand they are well under the spell of Russian agitation in terms of attacking Armenians.... These are real policies happening on the ground.... Moreover, if the Albanian and the Arab issues are examples to emulate, the Kurdish tribal chieftains will not stay idle. ⁸⁴ Conditions here are not good. Outside agitation and the reactionaries coming to power do not promise any good. For now the country is peaceful, but I think that that will change in the spring. The situation is very tense in Van. Bakir Sami Bey [has left], and the newly appointed governor is of Kurdish origin. He thinks not like a public official but [like] a Kurd. We have to keep a very calm attitude. ⁸⁵

Rostom was also apprehensive about the whole Armenian reform scheme, which was concocted by the tsarist regime (see below). He

believed that what Boghos Nubar Paşa was doing in Paris was not only childish but would bring trouble to Armenians in the eastern provinces: "Stupid are those of us who put any hope on the Russians. The current [Russian] government is timid and fears Germany. Boghos [Nubar] Paşa's mission can only bring harm to Armenians.... Boghos also thinks that a Kurdish dominion could be propitious for Armenians."

Suddenly Rostom senses a sort of deus ex machina: "Ottoman Spring' is showing its first sign...400 gendarmes came in: half for Van and the other half for Paghesh [Bitlis]. The governors of these two provinces are good people who work diligently. İttihad's representatives also passed through here. The Many promises [were given]. However, this time there is hope that these promises might be realized." The sudden shows the sudden

What is clear from Rostom's letters is that in the spring of 1913 the main enemy of the Armenians in the eastern provinces was the Kurds. According to one historian:

The primary enemy of the Armenians of Van—at least in spring 1913—turned out to be Kurdish tribesmen, who were even more eager than they [Armenian revolutionaries] to overthrow the Ottoman government. So severe had Kurdish depredations become that Sazonov [instructed by Olferiev (first name unknown) and Michael De Giers] formally demanded, on 29 May, that the Porte dispatch regular troops to protect them. When the Ottoman army arrived in force in Van vilayet some ten days later (this was during Turkey's brief respite in between the First and the Second Balkan Wars), Vice-Consul Olferiev was treated to the sublime spectacle of watching nearly 300 heavily armed Armenian Dashnaks, under the command of Aram pasha, pursue fleeing Kurdish nomads—alongside Ottoman troops.⁸⁹

The problem for Armenians in the eastern provinces and for the ARF in particular was that even the meager resources that the local Ottoman governors could supply to Armenians, including weapons from their own military/gendarme depots, were not enough to sustain a well-deserved self-defense against Kurdish depredations, which were ever more fueled by Russian hegemonic appetites. It is clear that the Kurdish tribes were duped by the Russians into believing that something extraordinary (like an autonomous Kurdistan) would be born out of the turmoil in the Ottoman east. Events were to prove them wrong, as Armenians had had the same experience on several occasions since the 1870s.

Thus the Armenians' zeal to arm themselves, which is amply documented in the ARF archival material, was not directed against the Ottoman government, as many Turkish and western historians argue. It was a last resort to defend what remained of Armenian existence on their historic homeland against newly manifested Kurdish aggression. This situation continued well into 1914 and was tangential to the general war. 90

This line of thinking is somewhat brought forth by McMeekin, who tries to read more into the affair than it really deserves:

Most Ottoman Armenians remained suspicious of the reactionary tsarist regime, which spied on the Dashnaks and Hnchaks just as it spied on all other avowed revolutionaries, and for good reason. By 1914 Dashnak and Hnchak branches in eastern Turkey had evolved into IMRO-style paramilitary organizations that devoted their primary energies to weapon smuggling, as an Ok[h]rana agent attending a Dashnak conference in Berlin reported to the tsar. In general Armenian socialists, like their European counterparts, were ideological opponents of "imperialism" of whatever stripe, as Dashnak headman Aram Pasha [Manukian] reminded Russian Vice-Consul Olferiev in March 1913. 91

To add fuel to the already simmering fire, in February–March 1914 Molla Selim, a Kurdish chieftain in Bitlis province, staged a rebellion against the government in the city. In all probability the uprising was yet another manifestation of Kurdish dissatisfaction with the status quo as promulgated by the new regime. To their chagrin Kurdish tribes saw in the constitutional regime a vehicle that would lead to the ascendancy of the Armenians. Thus Molla Selim's uprising can be viewed as a mobilization to stop such an Armenian superiority in their backyard. 92 Moreover, even though the Armenian Reform Project had somewhat alienated the CUP from the ARF, at this critical moment the Ottoman government assisted with what it could and armed Armenians to help protect themselves in Bitlis as it had done in Van in 1913. Thus it could be said with much certainty that through the Armenian Reform Project the Russians were successful in planting the seeds of suspicion between the ARF and the CUP and at the same time in turning the Kurds against the Ottoman state. According to *İkdam*:

During this rebellion, the Ottoman government distributed arms to Armenians to defend themselves. This was to protect them from the [Kurdish] rebels and to show the Great Powers that the Ottoman government is trying to do its best for the Armenians. An Armenian journalist in Bitlis said, "to defend themselves, the government distributed 150 arms [rifles] that were taken from the government depot. An Armenian was killed. But the killers were captured."⁹³

In such conditions Molla Selim declared a general rebellion in the Hizan district on March 8, 1914. Although his rebellion was finally quashed, it is amusing that Molla Selim would seek refuge, of all places, at the Russian consulate in Muş, where hundreds of Armenians had done the same in order to escape the wrath of his bandits. Selim was to remain there well into the beginning of the war, when the Russian consul general had to evacuate his post. Molla Selim was thus apprehended with several of his associates and was executed.

Another question arises: if Russia was arming Armenians until 1913, why did the Porte not underline that in its declaration of *casus belli* in November 1914? The answer is simple: while Russia was arming Kurds in the eastern vilayets, the Ottomans were doing the same with Muslims in the Caucasus through Enver's Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa. ⁹⁴ This played well for both sides in their efforts to counterbalance each other at a time when belligerency had reached its zenith. ⁹⁵

RUSSIAN INTRIGUE: THE TIMING OF THE ARMENIAN REFORM PROJECT

The history of the Armenian Reform Project and the diplomatic maneuvers accompanying it, which preoccupied all of the foreign chancelleries for about two years (1912–14), is best assessed by Roderic Davison:

With this agreement, every member gained something in one way. Turkey had a reform plan with minimum foreign control and so she was saved from immediate partition. Armenians gained something that promised to do more than on paper. Russia lost control of Turkey's Armenians but she appeased her Armenians and minimized the danger of revolt. England and Germany could not gain control of Anatolia for reforms. These states also understood that there would be no partition of Turkey, because no one was ready for this.⁹⁶

It is important to emphasize the precise timing that the tsarist government utilized in initiating its diplomatic maneuver in early June 1913. The First Balkan War was over. The campaign of ethnic cleansing of the Balkan Muslims created a real human tragedy as hundreds of thousands of destitute muhacirs were flocking in from the Balkan provinces and being literally dumped into Istanbul. They went all the way to the eastern provinces of the empire as well. The CUP had no other choice but to stage a brutal coup d'état to take control of the government and try to preserve what could be salvaged from the empire.

It was becoming clearer by the minute that most of the Christians (Bulgarians, Serbs, Macedonians, and Greeks) and even the Muslim ethnicities (Albanians, Arabs, and Kurds) were disassociating themselves from the crumbling empire. Even the Armenian Reform Project, which still advocated self-rule and a decentralized administrative system in the eastern provinces, was now looked upon by some CUP cadres with suspicion. If the rest of the ethnicities were aspiring to independence, why would the Armenians of the empire not desire to do the same, especially when everyone was now aware that the tenets of Ottomanism as the binding agent of the imperial society was a thing of the past. The Armenian intelligentsia in the capital was also affected by this mode of disassociation from the empire. Vahan Papazian (sometimes spelled Papazyan), an ARF leader and two-time member of the Ottoman parliament from Van, represented this Armenian thinking in his memoirs: "The İttihad ve Terakki, which has lost the battles in Africa and the Balkans, is not capable of taking any action to stop the administrative reforms that we are seeking. The internal and external political situation is very bad. They are trying to find money from foreign capitals. On the other hand, the reactive elements inside the country are waiting to create commotion inside the country."97

Moreover, Papazian opined: "What was meant by the reforms and what we were trying to achieve by them was a system that would guarantee the rights of Armenians as full and equal citizens of the [Ottoman] state. It is not of importance to us who oversees such reforms. All we ask for is that the system [of reforms] secures our national existence." 98

Moreover, Krikor Zohrab, the famous Armenian attorney and also a member of the Ottoman parliament with no party affiliation, characterized the situation as follows: "Today the international political situation is not favorable for the Turks. Therefore now is the best time to speak with the Turks regarding the [reform] issue. Such a day will be hard to

find again. Otherwise the Turks will find a way to save themselves from such an issue by promising things to this or that [European] power. In such a case the situation might be very difficult for Armenians."⁹⁹

It was at this juncture in history that the CUP abandoned its adherence to Ottomanism and desperately entangled itself in a convoluted Turkish nationalist ideology for which some of its zealots were resolutely calling. Simply put, Turkism was still an ideology of the CUP elite. The masses were still engulfed in a Muslim nationalism that was the result of the antipropaganda campaign against the Balkan Christians because of the two consecutive Balkan Wars.

Moreover, this Islamic-nationalist solidarity manifested itself in the boycott of Christian businesses—starting with the Greeks and funneling down to Armenians. This forced the patriarch, Zaven Efendi der Yeghiaian to plead with the government to stop this anti-Christian propaganda campaign, which was causing great material loss for Armenians.

There also seemed to be disagreement within the government regarding the Armenian Reform Project. Some important CUP members in the government (such as Talat, Enver, Cemal, and Cavid) viewed the anticipated reform agreement as a severing of the six eastern vilayets of the empire plus the province of Trabzon. But prime minister Said Halim Paşa, regardless of his own reservations and perhaps utter dismay about the project, seemed content with the outcome for the moment. He was betting that he would now be able to convince the British to enter into an agreement (more precisely an alliance) with the Ottoman Empire. 100 Therefore, even though the younger members of the government had grudgingly agreed to the reform agreement they insisted on keeping the agreement a secret and not publicizing it, because they had every intention of making its implementation impossible. By the time the details were hammered out and the two governors were en route to take over their posts, the Ottoman Empire entered World War I on November 1, 1914. The agreement was never implemented.

It could also be argued that the CUP's problem was managerial in nature rather than ideological. The Turkish revolutionaries of yesteryear who had become the leaders of the time were in awe over losing everything. They urgently needed all their ethnic elements to side with them at such a startling moment. From this perspective it appears that Russia's timing in reintroducing the belated Armenian reforms—or, to be more precise, in resurrecting the project after keeping it dormant for a long time—ultimately led Armenians back to Russian favoritism and thus put an end to their cooperation with the CUP. Perhaps it was this crucial

abandonment of an ally in need that really offended the CUP. As Reynolds argued:

Just as in 1895, St. Petersburg seized on burgeoning ethnic unrest in eastern Anatolia as both pretext for the campaign (the idea being that Armenians were in danger) and, of course, to hammer the Ottomans when they felt most vulnerable. The initial volley in the Armenian reform campaign was fired by A. A. Neratov, Russia's vice-minister for foreign affairs, on June 2, 1913, three days after Sazonov had demanded that the Porte send troops to Van and nine days before the Kurds were put to flight by the Dashnaks and Ottoman troops.... Neratov proposed to [Russian ambassadors] De Giers in Constantinople, Izvolsky in Paris, and Benckendorff in London that they push a new Entente campaign according to the 1895 draft.¹⁰¹

To say the least, the move was a subtle one that turned things topsyturvy for the fledgling ARF-CUP relations, at least the portion that still lingered in the eastern provinces through the efforts of Rostom. Confronted with an unending stream of Kurdish depredation and having only meager military and social means to defend itself, the ARF had to abandon its strategy of cooperation with the CUP and thus succumb to Russian intrigues. It was in such an atmosphere at the beginning of 1914 and under the duress caused by Molla Selim's rebellion that the ARF had to decide what was the most important issue: undoubtedly the physical security of the Armenian people. The Russian vice consul in Van deviously made the following argument to his superiors:

The [ARF and hence Armenian] turnabout is fair play. At the request of the Iranian government, Russian military authorities on the Iranian border have been searching for and finding weapons shipments among Armenians crossing into Ottoman territory. The vice consul noted that the original demand for border inspections and searches had come from Istanbul. Accordingly, he advised the Russian border guards not to conduct such searches since, as was well known, the Ottomans themselves had originally given a good many of those arms to the Dashnaks to use against the Russians [in Iran and the Caucasus]. What makes these incidents interesting is not simply that the Ottoman government was arming an organization whose revolutionary activities it feared,

the Dashnaktsutyun, but also that the Dashnaktsutyun chose to work with the Ottomans. 102

It is logical to assume that this turnabout of Russian policy toward favoring Armenians again was, to say the least, troubling for the Kurds, who had hoped that their collaboration with the Russians during past years was going to be in their favor. In this issue, coupled with the possibility of the Armenian reform treaty finally being signed, the Kurds saw a real danger to their very existence and patrimonial rights in the eastern provinces. An Austrian diplomatic exchange also documents that Armenian self-defense was mostly attributable to the Kurdish menace in 1915 and 1916: "In the regions where Armenians lived in Anatolia (Van, Erzurum, and Erzincan) news of revolts is being received.... The reason for this is the fighting of Armenian *çetes*... in retaliation for [the] Kurds' oppression of their people." 103

THE ARF EIGHTH GENERAL CONGRESS AND ENSUING NEGOTIATIONS WITH CUP: POSSIBILITIES FOR OTTOMAN NEUTRALITY

The specter of war was already looming as the ARF Eighth General World Congress began its sessions in the summer of 1914. In fact the congress was still in session when news of the conflict breaking out in Europe reached Erzurum. The ARF delegates came to the conclusion that the party should do its best to persuade the CUP to remain neutral in the war. After stormy sessions and discussions, however, the party also recognized the possibility of the Ottoman Empire entering the war. In such a situation the congress also ruled that each segment of the Armenian population—in the Russian Empire and the Ottoman Empire—would serve the state of its citizenship, as was its patriotic duty. The news of the war already erupting in Europe necessitated that the congress cut its sessions short so that delegates could reach their destinations. Hence a Committee of Nine remained behind to attend to unfinished business of the congress.

Memoirs of participants in the congress make it apparent that the party had given serious thought to the war. For instance, Vahan Papazian's memoirs provide a picturesque description of the atmosphere in Constantinople before and after the ARF Eighth General World Congress:

In the spring of 1914 the Ottoman parliament was on vacation. The central club of the CUP had turned into a center for

the government's leadership; there was too much commotion there.... Of course it was natural for us to understand the daily developments and the disposition and thoughts of the ruling circles.... The patriarchate's governing bodies did not give the same importance to keeping such relations or penetrating the curtains of the ruling class.... The members of the Ottoman parliament were more capable of keeping in close contact with the Turkish ruling circles. The ARF's secret machinery had certain means to penetrate their [CUP members'] clubs. The political atmosphere and inclinations were often made clear in the "Cercle d'Orient" political club, where international diplomats as well as Turkish governmental and political leaders passed the time. Zohrab (and Halajian I believe) was a member of such a club. 104 He began going there more often. Karo [Armen Garo] and Vartkes kept in contact with the ministers, 105 while a few of the other deputies did so with the other CUP officials.... All the information received was summarized at the top floor of the Azadamard editorial offices where the ARF Bureau was located. 106 It was there that they were organized, conclusions were extracted (of course if possible), and future steps were decided.... It was at this time that the Turks, one after the other, would vow to take an active role in the war. Ambitions were unleashed: on the one hand, the sweet picture of recapturing lost Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Balkan lands; on the other hand, becoming the ruler of the beautiful Caucasus and securing a bulwark against the Russian nightmare. Even unofficial negotiations and "deals" were being completed on this basis.... At that time the decisions of the ARF Eighth World Congress [about Turkey and the war] appeared already to be known to the Turkish leaders. [Ömer] Naci [Bey] and Behaettin Şakir had already met with our comrades in Erzurum. Talat had already made Garo understand that he was dissatisfied with the ARF's passive stance, adding that they [ARF members] were free to derive the necessary conclusions from that. 107

Moreover, Simon Vratsian writes that in the event of war the whole Armenian Reform Project was destined to evaporate into thin air:

As it is evident there is no enthusiasm toward the Reform Project or diplomatic actions in that regard. The [ARF Eighth] World Congress instead stressed confiding in the Armenian people and the party [ARF] and continuing internal organizational efforts....

The agenda points were not yet concluded when the news of the war in Europe reached the congress. The war in itself had created an extraordinary commotion within Turkish governmental circles, whose first action, as it was anticipated, was to let go of the Armenian Reform Project altogether. General inspector Hoff left Van quickly. A general mobilization was announced throughout Turkey, and preparations started everywhere for the war. Turkey was feverishly preparing for the war.... Regarding this general Turkish attitude and taking into consideration the incredulous viewpoint of the Turkish authorities [toward Armenians in general], the ARF World Congress shortened its agenda and started examining the possibility of Turkey entering the war. In this regard the participants decided to inform its organs and members throughout Turkey to remain faithful and loyal toward the state and duly perform their civil duties. At the same time the World Congress elected a seven-member special committee, which was to tackle all issues if the war started. 108 As a general decision the congress also determined that the party must firmly persuade Turkey to remain neutral, arguing that Turkey's participation in the war would be destructive not only for the Armenians but also for the Ottoman Empire in general. 109

The congress continued its sessions. It was clear, however, that the news of the war in Europe had created an atmosphere that was not favorable for the continuation of the congress:

At the end of July [old calendar] the Congress had exhausted its agenda and the delegates had left. The Congress did elect a ninemember committee, which was to decide on the rest of the issues that had not been discussed during the Congress.... The announcement of war had flabbergasted not only us, but even the Turkish authorities in Erzurum. The high-ranking officials themselves were not sure what was to be done next. Even if the declaration of war was not a surprise for them, it was still ill-timed, because in their opinion Turkey was not ready to take sides in the universal conflict. The wounds of the Balkan Wars had not yet been healed. The army was in shambles and had lost all moral spirit. The arming, as was seen during the Balkan Wars, was at best inadequate. The country's finances were in a very dire situation. Aside from issues pertaining to Armenians, the thorny

issue of the muhacirs was not yet resolved. Besides, the country was on the verge of collapse due to the dire consequences of many governmental functions, such as taxation, administration, and finances.... Although the Turks were deprived of any moral attitude toward the war, they were nevertheless in a bellicose mood. The situation was such that it was obvious that Turkey's participation in the war had become inevitable. This consideration in itself blackened all hopes that western Armenians felt on the horizon. ¹¹⁰

Reminiscing about the general atmosphere that surrounded the ARF General Congress, Vahan Minakhorian writes:

These were days of desperation, since there was an atmosphere of sadness in the countryside. Regardless, there were also glimpses of hope. It seemed that the time had come for the realization of decades-old dreams.... It was in such an atmosphere that the Eighth World Congress of the ARF started. The meetings were held at the ARF Center [in Erzurum]. The main object of the meetings' discussions was the reform project and issues associated with the reforms. The meeting started in a very solemn manner. There were no opening speeches. The president of the meeting was elected and the delegates' credentials were ascertained. The different regions' reports were read. They contained very sad realities. Land usurpation, partial deportations, many killings, as well as many instances of seizure of wealth and imprisonment were indicated in the reports. One couldn't stand without grief regarding such acts. The report by Bitlis representative Slak [Armenag Hokhigian] was really heartbreaking. The same could be said about Van, Muş, Erzurum, and Sivas. The situation was comparatively better for Armenians living on the shores of the sea. Everywhere the people [Armenians] were unarmed. Their only salvation was to be the reform project, if and when it materialized.... As soon as the sessions devoted to the reading of the reports were concluded, the meeting took a turn for the worse. The general war had started. The initial meeting agenda that was agreed upon at the beginning of the meetings...was now useless. The war had changed everything. The most important issue now was what Turkey's stance on the war was going to be. Could it be that we could escape the war [not participate in it]? Furthermore,

if the opposite happened, what situation would arise? Would it be possible to secure the physical existence of the Armenian people? What would happen if an atmosphere of lawlessness came about in the country because of the war? Could we still hope for reforms in this new situation? It was those issues that we, a group of people who had been isolated from the world and with no tangible news about what was really happening out there, were discussing at the meeting. It was because of this that the congress deemed it necessary that an informed member from Constantinople come to Erzurum. A telegram was sent asking for Karekin Pastermajian [Armen Garo or Karo] to come to Erzurum. 111 It was July 25 [August 7 per the new calendar] The next day we got news that K. Pastermajian could not leave Constantinople, because he was needed there. It seems that our demand was impossible since the journey itself would take ten days. The participants in the meeting had no other choice but to cut it short and concentrate the agenda on what was to be done now that the war had become inevitable.... Most of the delegates entertained the idea that if Turkey participated in the war the Armenians must perform their civil duties toward the state. However, the issue was more complex than what it seemed to be at first glance. And if Russia declared war on Turkey, what would be the stance of the Caucasian [eastern] Armenians in such a case? The majority of the members argued that they [eastern Armenians] too must perform their civil duties toward their state. Thus national aspirations were to be put aside for a more objective view, where each segment of the Armenian population had to follow the dictates of the authority of the state under which it lived. This was akin to an older mentality of "being isolated from one another" that had existed in the past. The participants were cognizant of the asperity prevalent in such a mentality. Even though no one wanted to mention the problematic issue of positioning a brother against his own brother, which such a policy could entail. There was also a hopeful attitude that the reform project, which has inspired Armenians everywhere, could still go forward. Whatever way one thought, no one could escape the bare truth: the Armenian people were obliged to partake in two camps that were diametrically opposed to each other. At first three or four delegates...were against such a fate. They were inclined toward a total rebellion in western Armenia [Constantinople delegate Hamazasp Srvantsian; Armenian Student

Organization delegate Dikran Khachigian; and the two delegates from Sivaz, Vartanian and Poladian. 112

It is important to note that Minakhorian mentions that Ruben Ter Minassian, an ARF leader with much experience in military matters, took the podium. After analyzing the political situation, he announced that in the event of war the ARF should form volunteer units and fight alongside the Ottomans: "However, during the discussions that ensued, Ruben Ter Minassian proposed that in the event of war we should form volunteer units and fight against the Russians and alongside the Turkish army." ¹¹³

Ruben Ter Minassian's suggestion of siding with the Ottomans was not an injudicious one. It was perhaps his military acumen that led him to think out of the box. But was the ARF ready to follow such a scheme? The geographic condition of Armenians, being separated in three states (Russia, the Ottoman Empire, and Iran), could not allow for such risky maneuvers. Thus the party was to choose the only "safe" possibility: to try to persuade the CUP to be neutral. If that proved impossible, the party should persuade Armenians to serve their civic duties in the state in which they were living. It must also be noted that neither the ARF nor any other Armenian political party had the power to decide on behalf of the whole people. It so happened that the monarchist Armenians in the Caucasus were already preparing Armenian public opinion to side with Russia and accept it as the only savior of the Armenians. 114

In a historical study published in 2008 by one American and three Turkish historians, the issue of the ARF-CUP negotiations pursuant to the ARF Eighth General World Congress held in Garin (Erzurum) in the summer of 1914 is brought into question:

The public face of the Dashnak Party was manifested at a party congress held in Erzurum in June–July 1914. Delegates from Russia and the Ottoman Empire, including the Van deputy, Vahan P[apazian], attended. It has been argued that [the] Committee of Union and Progress went to the congress to offer the Dashnaks autonomy in Eastern Anatolia, if the Dashnaks in the Ottoman and Russian Empires would take part in the war against the Russians, which the Dashnaks refused. There is no real evidence for this assertion, which is based on Armenian sources; but it is not impossible. What is certain was that the Dashnak Congress did resolve that the Ottoman Armenians would do their patriotic

duty. This was a subterfuge, as Ottoman intelligence reports... attested.¹¹⁵

The problem is that these negotiations for now are found solely in Armenian sources. The information provided is corroborated in the memoirs of several eyewitnesses present during these negotiations (some of whom were members of the Committee of Nine), so this should be construed as enough evidence to substantiate that Sabahaddin's visit and the subsequent negotiations did take place. The CUP delegation, composed of Dr. Behaettin Şakir, Naci Bey, and Hilmi Bey, came to the city accompanied by a deputation composed of representatives of Caucasian peoples who all had committed to side with the Ottomans and against the Russians in the event of war. The Committee of Nine elected Arshak Vramian to act as the chief negotiator with Sabahaddin and Naci Bey.

Vramian was killed less than a year later in April 1915 during the so-called Van rebellion, so he did not leave behind any written memoir regarding the negotiations. ¹¹⁷ But Vahan Minakhorian, Ruben Ter Minassian, Rostom, Simon Vratsian, and Vahan Papazian did so. ¹¹⁸ These memoirs have not yet been discussed in historical discourses, so I feel that it is appropriate to incorporate the sections that deal with the negotiations within this narrative.

Vahan Minakhorian gives important details regarding the events that transpired:

In the beginning of August the İttihad's general secretary, Behaettin Şakir, and Nazim Bey reached Erzurum.... They had come as if to negotiate with the ARF General Congress regarding the stance Armenians would hold during the war. A few days before this A. [Arshak] Vramian had also arrived at Erzurum. 119 Vramian had taken over the negotiations with the CUP delegates together with Rostom and Aknuni [Khachatur Malumian]. 120 After the first two meetings [with the Turkish delegates], Vramian reported to us in a casual manner. We were gathered at a corner of the orchard at the Sanasarian College. Aknuni, Rostom, S. [Simon] Vratsian, and R. [Ruben] Ter Minassian were present too. 121 It was very clear from what Vramian said that the Turkish side was very enthusiastic regarding the war and, consequently, any approach by the ARF regarding Turkish neutrality in the war was not being taken seriously by the Turkish delegates.... The Turks, positively assured of German military superiority and hence victory in the

war, were certain that the war itself would be advantageous for Turkey. They were also certain that, in the event of a Russian attack, they would be able to have the Muslims of Trans-Caucasia, the northern Caucasus, Central Asia, and even India rebel against the Russians, thus creating a bewildering situation not only for the Russian Empire but also for Great Britain. From this perspective they proposed that the ARF cooperate with them in an organized fashion not only in Turkey but in the Caucasus and in the Armenian diaspora. They proposed also that the ARF should organize volunteer units to aid the Ottoman army's rear, develop a struggle against the monarchic tsarist regime in Russia, and thus weaken the Russian resolve on the Caucasus front. Moreover, the Turkish delegates also proposed that the ARF motivate the Armenian diaspora to reveal the spirit of a united Armenian-Turkish stance and to sever all ties with foreign powers who had been prone toward interfering in the internal affairs of the Ottoman state vis-àvis the Armenian Question, because this issue would have a proper solution at the end of the war.... Vramian finished his report with a question.... What are we going to propose [to them, the Turkish side]?...No one of those present had the audacity to answer the question. All were engulfed in a deep, thoughtful posture. It was indeed an onerous situation. To accept the proposal of the Turkish side meant creating an ominous situation in the Caucasus and entering into an acutely venturesome situation, because what the Turks were proposing had no connection whatsoever to the past events of the Armenian liberation movement. Nor did it coincide with current Armenian aspirations. On the other hand, refusing the Turkish proposal meant creating an animosity for which western Armenians would pay dearly.... Moreover, it was clear that the ARF congress's decision to "perform the civil duties that the state would ask from us" would not satisfy the Turkish side. In those decisive days they were in need of armed Armenian regiments that would fight alongside to them on the front for the advancement of the Turkish war cause. They needed absolute proof that Armenians would not provide any armed assistance to the Russians to the detriment of the Ottoman side. An indubitable persuasion was needed, whereby Armenians would this time lead the Turkish armies from Erzurum to Kars, in an effort to attack the Russian positions in the Caucasus. Finally, it was also necessary that Armenians, as a single unit, would show without a reasonable

doubt that Armenians had forsaken the Armenian Question and would cease mentioning it during and especially after the war.... A couple of meetings were held with the Turkish delegates after Vramian had reported to us. They didn't produce any new results. Thus, the negotiations ended with no tangible results.... The only positive achievement after the negotiations ended was that those ARF delegates still present at Erzurum decided to keep the congress's decision intact, because it stressed that western Armenians would under no circumstances rebel during the war or instigate any measures of the national issue and should comply with all civil duties, while at the same time remaining honest and dutiful toward Turkey and the Turks. 122

Ever practical, Rostom (even at these tiring times) jotted down some thoughts and instructions in a letter addressed to the ARF Constantinople Responsible Body:

Dear Everyone,

Yesterday Khachatur [Malumian, Agnuni] and Vahan [Papazian, Goms] traveled from here [Erzurum]. The former is going to Bolis [Constantinople], while the latter is going to Samsun. This happened due to an unforeseen injunction of the government. It so happened that the police chief [of Erzurum] called both of them on Friday and told them in a categorical way that they have to leave the city by Saturday. All our solicitations meant nothing. Vramian clasped his hands in desperation. We don't know if this was a result of a general decision regarding us [the ARF] or if it was only concerning Khachatur and Vahan. Before he traveled, Khachatur sent a telegram to the minister [Talat Bey], but that served no purpose, since he had to leave town two hours later. Whatever the reasons for the police chief's decision, the result was the same: there is doubt and mistrust toward our organization. If this continues, the future will be bleak. I must say, even if this is a repetition, that Vartkes [Serengulian, deputy in the Ottoman parliament from Erzurum] is much needed here, at least for a two-month period. We don't know why he is not coming. It wasn't clear also from his letter. Whatever his reasons are, he must leave [Constantinople] and come here.... Vartkes's arrival is more important than Garo's. If Garo comes here he might be taken for conscription.... They might not allow Vahan to stay in Samsun.

In that case send him to America or Egypt. Keep Khachatur there [Constantinople] until I arrive. His entry into the eastern vilayets did not happen at a good or opportune time....

I kiss you all,

Rostom

P.S. I heard that [General] Hoff [one of the governors-general for the two envisioned Armenian vilayets] is returning to Istanbul. Let Garo give him a good reception.¹²³

The CUP delegates insisted that most if not all of the Muslim and Christian peoples of the Caucasus had already aligned themselves with the Ottoman war effort. What they now needed was a solemn agreement by Armenians to do the same. The CUP representatives were eager to win over the ARF by presenting lofty promises that if Armenians sided with the Ottomans the government was ready to create an autonomous Armenia. Otherwise Armenians had to bear the ultimate consequences of their negative answer: "They were particularly precise in their announcement that they were eager to create an autonomous Armenia on land including Russian as well as Ottoman Armenian provinces. They were also careful in saying that if Armenians didn't unite with them that would bring about drastic consequences." 124

Once again the ARF representatives tried hard to persuade the CUP representatives to remain neutral, because that would be the best course of action for the Ottoman Empire. What the ARF delegates did not recognize at the time was that Ottoman neutrality was a mirage, because the decision to enter the war on the side of the Germans had already been made.

The Armenians were amazed by the tenacity of the CUP representatives. How could they ask such an undertaking of the Armenians when they had opposed any form of reforms in the eastern provinces of the empire, which in itself had destroyed any enthusiasm that they might have had toward the Ottoman state:

This demand was in and of itself confusing, because relations between the ARF and the Turkish authorities had cooled off tremendously on the wake of the latter's futile maneuvers toward the Armenian Reform Project in general. Armenians could not offer more—that was a psychological and emotional impossibility. The ARF was not only unable to motivate eastern Armenians to rebel against the Russians but perhaps even unable to stimulate any

patriotism among the western Armenians toward the Ottoman Empire.... If anything, this was a clear indication of how much the Turkish regime was discredited in the eyes of the Armenian people.... On the contrary, it was more possible to assume that there would be an explosion of anti-Turkish sentiments among Armenians in the event that war erupted. That was exactly what happened. The Russo-Turkish War had not yet started when a strong—more precisely a spontaneous—wave of Armenian volunteering for the Russian cause mushroomed. This gave birth to the Armenian volunteer units in the Caucasus, where Armenians from all walks of life participated wholeheartedly.... Four volunteer regiments were formed in a very short time. The number of those who wanted to participate in those regiments was four times the number that was required.¹²⁵

Simon Vratsian gives a more or less similar picture of what transpired during those decisive days:

The ARF General Congress had ended when the CUP delegates Behaettin Şakir and Naci Bey reached Erzurum. They had brought with them several scores of Caucasian and Persian Azeri agents. Their aim was to organize an anti-Russian propaganda campaign and struggle in the Caucasus and northern Persia. Their program entailed a total mobilization of the eastern provinces. They were also authorized to open negotiations with the ARF General Congress in the hope of creating a united front against Russia.... The İttihad delegates proposed to the ARF representatives letting the Dashnaktsutyun unite with the Turks during the ensuing Russo-Turkish War. This was to be accomplished through a general Armenian rebellion in Caucasian Armenia. They insisted that the Georgians and the Caucasian Turks had already given their decision in this regard and were organizing for a general rebellion of their own. 126

Vratsian mentions that the CUP entourage that came to Erzurum included representatives of Georgians and Azeris who had "committed" to the Ottoman cause in the event of war:

Indeed the Caucasian Turks who had come to Erzurum with the İttihadist delegates did assure us that they were on their way to

their Caucasian locales to start the organization of such a rebellion and, in the event that the war started, to create disturbances in the rear of the Russian army with the aim of disorganizing and demoralizing that army.... Behaettin Şakir and Naci Bey considered the time ripe for the Caucasian peoples to throw off the Russian yoke.... According to them, Turkey had no intention of occupying the Caucasus. All it wanted was to create an autonomous state there under its auspices, so that it could act as a bulwark between the Ottoman Empire and the Russian Empire.¹²⁷

The ARF representatives' response stemmed from their utter belief that the best course for the Ottoman Empire was to keep its neutrality:

The ARF representatives stated that in their view it would be best if Turkey didn't enter the war at all, because they were convinced that the final victory would belong to the Allied powers. In such a case by participating in the war [on the side of the Central Powers] Turkey would lose dearly. They clarified that Turkey's interests were best preserved if the country remained neutral. A neutral Turkey would gain much more than a belligerent Turkey. To go to war in such conditions meant throwing the country into a dangerous quagmire. 128

For the CUP representatives, however, neutrality was not an option anymore: they were committed to enter the war to reclaim what had been lost during the last years (1911–13). The ARF was in a perilous situation. The CUP was asking it to incite eastern Armenians against Russia. Considering the euphoria that eastern Armenians were experiencing at this time, what was asked of the ARF was impossible in its own right:

The İttihad delegates were adamant in their stance. The issue of war was already decided for them. For them, missing such an opportunity was tantamount to guilt, because no such opportunity would repeat itself in terms of getting rid of their age-old enemy, Russia. German victory was not an issue of doubt for them. Moreover, a victorious Germany undoubtedly meant a victorious Turkey. They wanted to persuade Armenians to join hands with them and fight against a common enemy. The ARF leaders stated, however, that if Turkey entered the war contrary to their will the ARF organs and members in Turkey would complete all their civil

duties toward their state. As for the matter of Caucasian Armenians, the ARF in Turkey could not decide on their behalf and motivate them to rebel. This was especially so because in the last five years the Turkish authorities had not utilized an inviting policy toward western Armenians, which in turn would have served as a catalyst to attract eastern Armenians to their side.... This, of course, was not the answer that the İttihad delegates awaited. They wanted more tangible proofs of "Ottoman patriotism." 129

Ruben Ter Minassian presents a different view regarding the promises of the CUP delegates at Erzurum. Of utmost importance in Ter Minassian's memoirs is his insistence that it was the Ottoman delegates who first brought up the idea of erecting a semi-independent Armenian state after the war in the event of an Ottoman victory:

No Armenian political party had even envisioned the constitution of an Armenian Republic on eastern Armenian lands (the Araradian Armenia), because those lands had been occupied by Russia in 1827.... The first time that the creation of such a republic was ever mentioned was when Behaettin Şakir, Ömer Naci, and Hilmi Bey visited Erzurum at the end of August 1914, when the ARF [Eighth] World Congress had ended its sessions there and the Committee of Nine was elected to complete lingering issues. It was they who proposed to the Armenian negotiators the creation of an Armenian state, with its center at Etchmiadzin, and attaching to it some parts of western Armenian lands. They were practically proposing the creation of a United Armenia. It was the Turks who were proposing this, on condition that we demand this from Russia and thus become the spearhead of an anti-Russian rebellious movement in the Caucasus in the event that war broke out.... Without delving into the minutiae of the negotiations that took place there [in Erzurum], it is important to stress here that the suggestion of creating a United Armenia came from the Turkish side. 130

As noted above, Ruben Ter Minassian was the only member of the Committee of Nine who advocated forming Armenian volunteer units and fighting alongside the Ottomans in the event of war. Here he stresses that of all people it was the CUP representatives who promised the creation of an autonomous Armenian entity in the event that the ARF

joined their effort against the Russians. This was contrary to the extremely encouraging but at the same time utterly vague promise that the Russians presented to Armenians. During Tsar Nicholas's inspection visit to the Caucasus in late 1914, he stated to Catholicos Gevork V: "Tell your flock, Holy Father, that a most brilliant future awaits the Armenians." ¹³¹

In any case Ruben concludes that what the ARF sought was still not a unified autonomous Armenian entity but rather two Armenian semiautonomous entities within the Russian Empire and the Ottoman Empire:

The ARF remained adamant on its modest demands: a federation in the Caucasus under Russian rule, and Adem-i Merkeziyyet [Decentralization] in the Ottoman Empire. By declining all proposals of war and a revolution in the Caucasus, the ARF was pleading with the Turks not to enter the war, while at the same time promising them that in the case of war Armenians in both countries would remain loyal citizens and fulfill all of their civic duties.¹³²

It is interesting at this juncture to evaluate the sincerity of the sides in their lofty promises and intentions. As one historian opines:

Without having access to the transcripts of the thoughts of the participants in the meeting, it is difficult to know how sincere either party was. The idea that a government in Istanbul would have been willing to delegate some of its control and authority in Erzurum, Van, and Bitlis to the Armenians following a victorious war is quite difficult to imagine. The most obvious interpretation is that it was a theatrical act in which the Ottoman government made the Dashnaks an offer that they knew the Dashnaks could not accept, and the Dashnaks politely and falsely promised their loyalty. By going through the formality of inviting the Armenians to become allies, the Ottomans were in effect making it explicit that the Armenians were not allies. And faced with such an offer, the Dashnaks could hardly have said yes or absolutely no, as the former answer would have meant warfare with the stronger Russian army and thus strategic disaster, while the latter would have exposed them to retribution even before the beginning of the war.... There is a powerful logic to the above interpretation, and subsequent events would seem to confirm it. Yet it is not the only plausible interpretation. Even after the Dashnak leadership's

formal refusal to join the fight against the Russians, the Ottomans persisted in trying to persuade lower-ranking Dashnaks to join the armed bands they were arming and sending across the border into Iran. The Germans were exploring the possibility of using the Armenians against the Russians, and backed the idea of the Ottomans cooperating with them. As Ottoman intelligence reports suggest, opinions among even Armenian revolutionaries in the summer of 1914 about the proper course to take were divided. Those revolutionaries in the Russian Caucasus were much more aggressive in outlook and mobilized for a war of "liberation" well before the actual onset of hostilities. ¹³³

EASTERN ARMENIAN EUPHORIA: THE FORMATION OF THE ARMENIAN VOLUNTEER UNITS

It was in such an elated mood that the Armenian National Council in Tiflis eagerly established four Armenian volunteer regiments, known as *druzhiny*, to serve in a Russian invasion. ¹³⁴ The first druzhina was based in northern Iran under the command of the famous Armenian field commander Antranig. The second was poised to attack Van from Yerevan and was led by the Armenian revolutionary Tro (Trastamat Ganaian). Assisting Tro was Armen Garo. The third and fourth regiments were under the command of Hamazasp Srvantsian and Arshak Kavafian (aka Keri) and were to be deployed between Sarıkamış and Olti. The latter three regiments were known jointly as the Ararat Unit and had as their mission the capture of Van. ¹³⁵

What should be stressed is that many leading ARF members were against the formation of the Armenian volunteer units. A partial list of them would include Hovhannes Kachaznuni, Simon Vratsian, Ruben Ter Minassian, Khachatur Malumian, Ottoman parliament members Vartkes Serengulian and Vahan Papazian, and even Rostom. Having assessed the extremely risky situation that awaited western Armenians in the event of war, the Armenian leadership met under the auspices of the prelate and the National Assembly to assess the situation and decide on a course of action. On that occasion the Constantinople faction of the ARF All Armenia Bureau invited its members to a lengthy consultation to clarify the current political situation and especially to stress the inclination of the leaders of the Constantinople Bureau's region regarding what positions should be taken by Turkish—and Caucasian—Armenians, assuming that

the party's Eighth World Congress had been unable to determine such positions.

Concomitantly the ARF Constantinople circle also began addressing the same issues. Papazian gives a vivid description of what transpired during those meetings in the Ottoman capital:

Invited to those sessions, besides our important comrades, were Shahrigian, [Garegin] Khajak, Hrach [Hayg Tiryakian], Armen Garo, Vartkes [Serengulian], [Garabed] Pashayan [aka Taparig], Mar, 137 Sarkis Minasian [aka Aram Ashod], 138 Sarkis Parseghian, etc. The only non-party member was [Krikor] Zohrab. Unfortunately, it is impossible for me, after all these years and experiences, to recall individual members' opinions about the situation.... I only remember the gloomy events, the worried eyes, and my comrade's pale faces with the awareness of their awful responsibilities in that room.... I remember well that there was a general belief that the Turks were throwing themselves into the chaos of war without a cause [motive]. By the same token, we had an internal conviction that they would take the Germans' side to even their score with the Russians.... In this instance we found before us a tough issue: how would we extract ourselves from this terrifying choice, which is nothing more than having to decide between two extremes? The Russian Armenians were going to fight in the Russian army and naturally would happily lead that army toward the Promised Land—Turkish-Armenia. While we were obliged to join the Turkish army, not just as soldiers: the Turks would undoubtedly demand from us that we neutralize operations of the Russian-Armenian soldiers and freedom fighters [irregulars] and would even expect extraordinary services (about which they had already spoken to us in Erzurum).... And what can be said about the opposite circumstance? We were also conscious of that, of course not to the extent and horror to which it would occur. We expected ruthless persecution against the Turkish Armenian irregular forces and intellectuals. 139

Papazian also portrays Krikor Zohrab as being utterly pessimistic and deeply overcome by the situation:

He [Zohrab] had lost his usual liveliness. He was extremely worried and disturbed. He spoke of the final burial of the reforms....

"If Turkey joins Russia's enemies, it will take its revenge out on us for these years of revolution and also for the Armenian Cause,..." he muttered, almost to himself, sitting next to me. And when others, especially Khajak, 140 were speaking of Russia's formidable strength and how it could quickly deal a death blow to the Turks, Zohrab, who only knew the Russians from history and in Constantinople, was seized for a moment by the assurances. But then Shahrigian came and disturbed his soul's peace. To this day I cannot think of that great man's psychological misery without deep emotion. 141

Apparently those present were looking at two possible positions. Both were precarious to western Armenians:

The first was that from the first day of a Russo-Turkish war the Russians would inflict a lightning-quick, crushing blow on the Turks. In that case regiments of Armenian volunteers had to be ready in the Caucasus. They would, as an advance guard, quickly capture the important strategic points in Armenia, not allowing Turkish or Kurdish elements to harm the Armenian population. 142 But our political demands had to be formulated and be introduced to the Russian authorities through the catholicos. Our political desire was the independence of Turkish Armenia under Russian protection. At the same time the ARF Armenia Bureau had to order its organizations in the provinces secretly to prepare for self-defense. But in a moment of peril (in case of emergency) [they would] unite with the invading Armenian regiments. This position was defended by Khajak, and to a certain degree by Armen Garo, Sarkis, and Dr. Pashayan. The second position was more conservative. Its proponents were more pessimistic about the chances of a rapid Russian advance, given the weakness of Russian commanders in the Caucasus and the large number of troops that were needed on other fronts. In their opinion the dangers for the Turkish Armenian population were inescapable. Although the order for self-defense had to be given, it was also essential to assemble some large Armenian fedai groups at a few points near the borders in the Caucasus. They should remain in reserve and only cross the border in an extreme circumstance such as a massacre of the Armenian population or a complete defeat of the Ottoman forces. 143

The most important point was that, regardless of how jubilant the eastern Armenians were over the prospect of joining the Russian campaign, there should be no direct Armenian participation in the Russian army:

They thought it would be detrimental to organize any kind of volunteer units and thereby completely subordinate themselves to the Russian army. Besides not provoking the Ottomans against the Armenians, the defenders of this position believed that they had to forewarn the Turkish leaders to think twice about taking any steps by announcing that the Armenians on the other side of the border would not move from their places if the Armenian population inside were not threatened with physical danger. Otherwise the forces gathered on the borders could easily enter the country along secret routes and harass the Turkish forces from the rear and flanks, create internal anarchy, and assassinate Kurdish bandit elements. This position was defended by S[arkis] Minasian, Hrach [Tiryakian], Vartkes [Serengulian], Shahrigian, and me, and later by Zohrab.

In the end the two opinions were irreconcilable:

The two opposing positions remained incompatible. It was decided to submit the two positions to the examination of the [ARF] Central Committee [?] and, at the same time to the Eastern Bureau (Caucasus Section) [?] through myself while expecting the return of the World Congress delegates so that, if needed, they could reexamine the issue.... In the meantime, however, all were in agreement that Turkish Armenians had to undertake their civic responsibilities as citizens honestly and accept the sacrifices demanded of them, including enlistment in the army, special war taxes, etc.¹⁴⁵

The issue of what strategy to follow was also the main point on the agenda of a meeting at the Armenian Patriarchate in Constantinople at which representatives from all Armenian political parties were present. Reminiscing about the events of the time, Patriarch Zaven der Yeghiaian writes:

At this time any thoughtless act or anti-Turkish demonstration on the part of Armenians living abroad could have endangered the existence of the Turkish Armenians. Consequently, during the months of July and August 1914, Dr. N. Daghavarian went to Tiflis with my instructions to meet with Armenian intellectuals and leaders to request that they act with great caution, because any thoughtless undertaking or excessive demonstrations on their part could threaten the lives of their Turkish Armenian brothers. A month later Dr. Daghavarian returned completely disillusioned, because his exhortations had produced no results, and thinking about the Russian Armenians appeared to be completely different. Shortly thereafter the recently ordained prelate of Gesaria [Kayseri], Bishop Khosrov Behrigian, came back from Echmiadzin and told us about the joyful atmosphere in Tiflis, where [Armenian] volunteers were signing up "to fight against the Turks and liberate Turkish Armenians."...This heartbreaking report caused me much mental anguish. 146

The most damaging issue regarding Patriarch Zaven was a declaration, supposedly bearing the patriarch's name, published in a November 1914 issue of the Armenian newspaper *Mshak* in Tbilisi. This is presented in Turkish historiography in the following manner:

On the other hand, having an interview with the newspaper *Mshak* before the war began, Zaven Efendi stated that "the total solution of the Armenian issue would be under the sovereignty of Russia, [on] which the whole fate of the Armenians depended historically," just as Kevork [Gevork] the Fifth, the catholicos, said. Besides, the patriarch said that "the sooner Russia comes here, the better it would be for us." Specifying the official statements in favor of the [Ottoman] government during the war in his memories, Zaven Efendi did not mention these statements.... Twenty days after the declaration of the patriarch that we mentioned on November 30, 1914, the Armenian office in Tbilisi declared that the Armenians would definitely join the war on the side of Russia with the declaration published.¹⁴⁷

Thus the declaration ascribes statements to the patriarch to the effect that he encouraged Armenians to side with Russia in the war. Given the tsarist inclination of the newspaper in question, we can only sense a diabolic conspiracy in this affair. It is now becoming evident through new research that Patriarch Zaven had on several occasions given interviews

to Armenian and Ottoman newspapers, where he upheld the position that western Armenians would diligently serve their state against Russia in the event of war. The only logical conclusion is that the *Mshak* declaration attributed to Patriarch Zaven was a clear fabrication that was most probably concocted in the Tbilisi command section of the Russian Okhrana [Russian Secret Police] and was passed on to *Mshak*, whose editor was more than eager to publish it, regardless of the enormous responsibility that such a scheme would have imposed. At the time, however, this plot became a trump card for the Ottoman government, which it used for its own advantage in terms of formulating its plans vis-à-vis Armenians during the war. The secretary of the control of the ottoman government, which it used for its own advantage in terms of formulating its plans vis-à-vis Armenians during the war.

It is well documented in Vahan Papazian's memoirs that confusion within the Western ARF leadership regarding the war and which side to choose was prevalent within ARF bodies in the Caucasus. He was sent from Constantinople to Tbilisi by way of Trabzon-Batumi to speak to the ARF bodies in the Caucasus and if possible to persuade them to stop or at least tone down their pro-Russian rhetoric, which was detrimental to their western counterparts. Papazian writes:

As to what concerned the leadership of our ARF regions, I found them in an equivocating and disturbed condition. The delegates to the World Congress had already returned. Therefore they already knew the World Congress decisions and the CUP proposals from their reports. At the same time moral pressure was being applied from all sides to decide positively on the issue of volunteer regiments and to assume leadership of their organization. If I'm not mistaken, one of the future commanders, Antranig, 150 had already been summoned by telegram.... This was the atmosphere when I reached Tbilisi. We had a series of vitally important meetings with a broad circle of ARF leadership.... I remember meetings at Dr. Zavriev's sister's home.... My report about the ARF All Armenia Bureau, Constantinople Section's views was examined at length, with deep seriousness, and from many sides. For me, however, it was already clear that among the comrades in Tiflis [Tbilisi] the preponderant view from the beginning was in favor of participating in volunteer regiments in the Russian army. The excited demonstrations and public mass meetings making demands for our ranks and our military figures had affected them. They thought that it was not possible to neglect that ardent movement and leave the dispositions of the ranks to fate, where

they could fall into dire straits or turn into tools of the Russian commanders.¹⁵¹

The euphoria surrounding the formation of the Armenian volunteer units was also prevalent in diasporan Armenian communities in Europe and even as far away as the United States. Malkhas (Ardashes Hovsepian) arrived at Constantinople (from Europe) in August 1914 to inquire about the situation regarding the volunteer units and what the ARF Western leadership thought about the project. 152 It seems that a very jubilant Armen Garo assured him that the ARF Western Body viewed the formation of such units positively and had discussed the issue during its meetings.¹⁵³ Malkhas continued his travels and reached Tbilisi. He also says that upon reaching Tbilisi a meeting was arranged at the home of Arshag Chamalian, an ARF leader and member of the Eastern Bureau of the party. Yektan Türkyılmaz describes what transpired as follows: "From the outset, there were voices within the ARF who diverged from the overwhelming majority and advocated caution and neutrality. In the first meeting of the ARF leadership in Tbilisi to deliberate on the message that Malkhas brought from the Western Bureau, Avetis Shahkhatunian opposed the idea of the volunteer battalions." Malkhas recounts Shahkhatunian's position: "We should not believe in the vain promises of the great power's diplomacy, which can be withdrawn tomorrow. The Armenian people, whatever country they live in, should fulfill their citizenship duties; a volunteer movement may have grave consequences." According to Malkhas, Shahkhatunian failed to understand the new enthusiasm for the fight. Shahkhatunian could not understand that, even if the National Bureau and the ARF had wanted to prevent the volunteer movement, they would not have succeeded. 154

Likewise the Armenian historian Leo narrates another case of dissent within the ranks of the ARF. Before the Turkish-Russian War Hovhannes Kachaznuni, the first prime minister of the independent Armenian Republic created after the war under ARF's leadership, arrived in Tbilisi with a message from the ARF Central Committee in Van province and opposed Armenians' arming themselves to fight with the Russians:

The ARF committees of Van as well as others [committees] in the country [eastern Anatolia] are against the volunteer movement that has started in the Caucasus; they deem it to be an extremely dangerous initiative for Turkish Armenians. Aside from that, based upon the decisions of the World Congress in Erzurum, the

Van Committee requests an immediate termination of the movement in order not to incite the doubts of the Turkish government toward Armenians for no reason.¹⁵⁵

Türkyılmaz then continues: "Leo described Kachaznuni's statement as the 'country's [Ottoman Armenia's] self-preservation instinct speaking for the last time.' Kachaznuni's message did not change the position of the bureau." Leo thought that the Ottoman Armenians' attempt at self-preservation was "violated by Russian-Armenians' egoism." This does not explain, however, why certain Turkish Armenian party members, such as Armen Garo, were among the leaders of the volunteer movement. For Leo, the bureau's dismissal of the ARF Central Committee's request for neutrality was not surprising. 156

Moreover, the Constantinople Western Bureau of the ARF sent yet another delegate to Tbilisi as late as October 1914 (this time Garabed [aka Garo] Sassouni) to persuade the eastern Armenians to desist from such euphoric manifestations, which implied clear danger to western Armenians:

I had boarded a ship from Constantinople to Trabzon... The issue of raising the Armenian Volunteer Units had created a big euphoric commotion in Tbilisi. ARF [western] leaders had instructed me to go to Erzurum and Bitlis and tell our comrades there that the issue of these volunteer units was against western Armenian interests. The ARF leaders had also instructed me to travel to eastern Armenia via the Caucasus and to inform our comrades there to desist from such actions.¹⁵⁷

Sassouni's trip was riddled with problems from the start. By the time he had boarded a ship from Constantinople to Trabzon, the German battle cruisers SMS *Goeben* and SMS *Breslau* had already been commissioned by the Ottoman navy to bombard Russian fortifications in the Black Sea area. Sassouni was obliged to stay on board for fourteen days and finally was able to disembark in Odessa and then take the Rostov train to Tbilisi. ¹⁵⁸

Sassouni amply illustrates that the situation within the ARF ranks in Tbilisi was stifling regarding the formation of the Armenian volunteer units. Dr. Hagop Zavriev, who was an ardent advocate of the formation of such units, visited the ARF Eastern Bureau offices in Tbilisi. In the preceding months Kachaznuni had been in Van and discussed the issue of

the volunteer units with Aram Manukian. Kachaznuni, who had understood from Aram that he was totally against the formation of such units, did not even bother to salute Zavriev when he met him. When Zavriev started to discuss the formation of the volunteer units, Kachaznuni stood up with his fists clenched and was on the verge of hitting Zavriev in the face. But the rest of the attendees stopped him from doing so. Such heightened emotions show that the enterprise was so contentious in nature that it created rifts between eastern Armenian leaders. ¹⁵⁹

Be that as it may, and regardless of the cautious efforts of the ARF leadership in the Ottoman Empire, eastern Armenian anticipation coupled with Russian intrigue and propaganda won the day. Eastern Armenians zealously attached their fate to the Russian war effort and formed five volunteer units whose total number of soldiers was estimated to be between 3,500 and 5,000 men. ¹⁶⁰ The formation of these volunteer units was met with extreme suspicion by the Ottoman state's intelligence community. The political establishment was also informed. The specter of a widespread Armenian rebellion in the eastern war front was bewildering for Ottoman leaders, to say the least. On the basis of the reports regarding the formation and deployment of these Armenian volunteer units the Ottoman leaders and military commanders were to formulate their decisions to deport Armenians.

CONCLUSION

This narrative shows that the ARF and CUP did collude in Iran and the eastern provinces during the 1909 to 1914 period. In so doing it has not only negated the existing archaic and linear historiography but has attempted to create a new paradigm that necessitates new research regarding the era. Moreover, this study has reexamined Armenian-Russian relations during the era under discussion and underlined new premises. All this was made possible by a thorough usage of archival and primary material not hitherto utilized.

The quintessential question here can be formulated as follows: how is it that relations between the ARF and the CUP deteriorated so quickly after years of collaboration and collusion? The mother of all surprises in this case is the tactical Russian move of reintroducing the dormant Armenian Reform Project for the purpose of hampering the thriving ARF-CUP cooperation. We must also not forget that the awkward timing of the introduction of such a project was challenging, to say the least. Burdened by the heavy human and material losses of the Balkan War and

neglected by all European powers, the CUP had to endure a humiliating venture that, in its own thinking, was aimed at stripping away its only remaining hinterlands in the east. It seems that Sazanov's strategy was corrosively successful in deepening the wedge between the two allies.

What about the ARF race to arm the Armenian population in the eastern provinces? Despite past scholarship concerning the era and the finger-pointing about this arming being conducted against the Ottoman government, this study clearly shows that the culprit in this case was Kurdish belligerency. The Ottoman east had been a land of prowling tribes. Its structure was still primordial: law-abiding sedentary Armenians—as well as Turkish and even Kurdish villagers—were pitted against lawless Kurdish tribal and Circassian marauders. Add to that the newly arrived destitute Muslim muhacirs from the Balkans as a result of the two Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913, who were literally dumped into the region. This combination provided a perfect recipe for starvation, lawlessness, and interethnic strife. Even with the best of intentions, the CUP was unable to change the status quo on the ground in the eastern provinces of the empire. Moreover, Russian collusion with the Kurds was also part and parcel of the tsarist strategy to keep the area in constant turmoil.

The ARF sought to persuade the CUP to remain neutral regarding an international conflagration. Was the ARF viewing such neutrality as an authentic possibility? It seems not. As one historian interestingly suggested:

Ottoman neutrality was not plausible. As Enver explained, the Ottoman government could pursue its course of reform only if the empire "were secured against attacks from abroad," and this in turn required that it obtain "the support of one of the Great Powers." By throwing their lot in with one of the warring blocs, the Ottomans might manage to secure a respite from outside intervention in the event their side won. But if the Ottomans refused to pick sides and remained neutral, they would be more vulnerable than ever after the war, since the defeat of one side would leave the empire alone and exposed to the victors. The option of playing off the stronger powers against one another had kept the empire in existence such as it was, but this option would no longer be available after a general European war.¹⁶¹

Nonetheless, the most damning Ottoman verdict regarding an alleged "Armenian insurgency" came by way of a lengthy Ottoman military

intelligence report written by Şükrü Bey, the 3rd Army's chief of Intelligence in Van in March 1915:

To Ottoman Army General Headquarters:

The nearing of the end of Turkey is being declared all over the country. Papasijan [Papazian] and Viremijan [Vramian], members of the parliament, in order to convey the results of the congress that is to be convened in Istanbul and to make the necessary preparations, have held a large [ARF Eighth General] congress in Erzurum, in which the Tashnaktsutyun [Dashnaktsutyun, ARF] delegates coming from the Caucasus also participated.

In this congress held in Erzurum, they have worked on the text of the agreement. The terms were set with the Russians in regard to Russia's handing the occupied regions over to the Armenians and guaranteeing a free Armenian state. The Russian Armenian agreement was approved by the congress, and the following articles were decided to be sent to the [ARF] committees:

- I. We will continue to show submission and keep silent until the declaration of war. But in the meantime we will equip ourselves with weapons that are to be obtained from Russia and the inner regions.
- 2. Should the war be declared, all the Armenians in the Ottoman [Empire] are to join the Russian forces with their firearms.
- 3. We are to keep silent should the Turkish army advance.
- 4. Should the Turkish army withdraw or come to a standstill, all the gangs should start their activities behind the lines in accordance with the plan they already have.¹⁶²

Moreover, Şükrü Bey's report is replete with inacuracies regarding the events he describes. Papazian, for example, left for Constantinople immediately after the congress, where he was to be present when issues pertaining to the start of the war and to what position Armenians had to take weighed heavily during the discussions that ensued at the Armenian Patriarchate. No mention of the meeting with the governor of Erzurum is found in the four Armenian memoirs cited above. Nonetheless, Şükrü Bey continues:

After the acceptance and distribution of the decisions taken at the congress, the member of the parliament Viremijan [Vramian] has proposed the following in writing to the governor of Erzurum:

Should the Ottoman Government declare war upon Russia, in the event of the Ottoman army's launching an attack upon the Caucasus, the Ottoman government should make a strong promise to the Armenians living in the region on the issues of cooperation during the war...and this promise should be fulfilled.

Viremijan's application to the governor of Erzurum, which he made after having had the above-mentioned four articles approved and closing the congress, served for the attainment of two specific objectives:

- To be able to revive their national goals should the Ottoman government be victorious.
- 2. To keep the unfaithful secret Armenian organization away from the eyes of the Ottoman government.

Viremijan and Papasijan, having thus completed their tasks in Erzurum, have moved to Çankeli monastery together with a couple of the leaders from the Dashnaktsutyun Committee, where they have invited the Armenians living nearby to convey the decisions taken at the congress.

The 3rd Army reveals the decisions taken at the congress and orders and warns the governor and the commanders under its service to be fully alert.¹⁶³

Şükrü Bey's report shows that the Ottoman army's intelligence service perhaps started building its case regarding an alleged Armenian insurgency late in 1914. It is also noteworthy that all indications point to the iniquitous battle and ensuing Ottoman defeat at Sarıkamış in December 1914, which necessitated the concoction of an "enemy within" to take the blame, even though no western Armenian sedition was involved in the 3rd Ottoman Army's collapse at the front at the time. Moreover, Ottoman military intelligence accounts written before Şükrü Bey's report all dealt with the activities of eastern Armenian volunteer regiments. For example:

To the 3rd [Ottoman] Army Headquarters Your Highness

Attached is the copy of the report given by the police officer who was sent to the environs of the Bozviran village of the Pasinler district to inspect the situation of the Armenian settlers in the area. The report is presented with the aim of obtaining the commander's views on the issue. The report is also being sent to the Office of the Kaymakam for further investigations. September 13, 1914 Deputy of the Governor of Erzurum Head of the Provincial Treasury

I had heard officially and unofficially, when I was in Russia, that the Russian government was relying heavily on the Armenians both for the solution of the eastern provinces problem and for the solution of the minor upheavals in the Caucasus and that the Russian government was trying to pull the Armenians on its side to incite upheavals and turmoil in the eastern provinces of Anatolia, whenever it wanted, with the aim of putting pressure on our government by interfering with our internal affairs.

I have also heard recently, in Petersburg, that the Russians are investing so much money for the realization of this goal that Armenians living in our country might feel urged to join the Armenians on the other side of the border that are already provoked by the Russians. Hence I find the reports presented by the police extremely worthy of consideration. 164

Such ubiquitous reports are sometimes really confusing. For while some of them indicate the problematic nature of Armenian forces joining the Russians, others present quite a contrary view as to the real strength of those same Armenian forces in the Caucasus. Compare, for example, the following report written in August 1914 to the preceding one: "Ottoman military intelligence noted with satisfaction that Armenian fighters had little loyalty to Russia and constituted a weak link in the Russian Caucasus Army. The Armenians were spreading socialist ideas among the ranks, while the achievements of the Ottoman constitutional regime were even winning sympathy among Armenian circles in the Caucasus." ¹⁶⁵

As the report suggests, in August 1914 the Ottoman military felt no danger from the eastern Armenians as a force to reckon with in case of war. It follows that the policy of Armenian deportations morphed into an extermination campaign in its own right after May 1915. An Ottoman archival document reveals that Talat sent secret and ciphered telegraphic instructions to the governors of the eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire in late 1914, in which he clearly stated his intent for a limited "transfer of subversive elements to outside the war zone. In the event of

war, Armenians and missionary establishment representatives would have to be sent to other regions."¹⁶⁶ Talat did not assign a date for such an action. Nonetheless, no serious deportation actions were taken before the battles in Van in April and May 1915.

While many can argue with certainty that Talat and his cohorts were novices regarding matters involving high politics, the reality remains that the CUP leadership was more than capable of taking advantage of an opportunity that presented itself. It is from this perspective that the whole debacle of the Russian angle becomes important. The tsarist regime was not an innocent bystander in regard to what happened to Armenians during the general war. In fact it packaged the Armenian Question and presented it as a prospective opportunity to the CUP leadership.

Neither could the issue of Armenian defection from the Ottoman army, which Turkish historiography regularly addresses, be considered reason enough for Armenian "treachery." As a Turkish historian's latest research shows, the general percentage of defection from the Ottoman Army stood at 28–30 percent, which indicates that Armenian defection was no higher than defection of Turks, Kurds, and other ethnic elements. ¹⁶⁷

NOTES

- The day-to-day relations between the ARF and CUP during the period under discussion are reported in Dikran M. Kaligian, Armenian Organization and Ideology under Ottoman Rule, 1908–1914. This study does not address many of the issues already tackled in Kaligian's monograph.
- 2. Yusuf Hikmet Bayur, Türk İnkılabı Tarihi, vol. 2, part 3, 21.
- 3. Armenian Revolutionary Federation Archives: Yervant Pambukian, ed., *Nyuter Hay Heghapokhagan Tashnagtsutyan Badmutyan Hamar* 8:4–5. The *Nyuter Hay Heghapokhagan Tashnagtsutyan Badmutyan Hamar* is the printed series of archival material from the ARF Archives, which are housed at the Hayrenik Building in Watertown, Massachusetts. As of the time of this writing volume 10 had been published (containing material up to 1913). Volume 11 will be published in 2015 and will contain documents pertaining to the period 1913–1914. Archival materials that are not in the printed volumes are given by their respective archival call numbers.
- Garabet K. Moumdjian, "Reevaluating the April 1909 Adana Ordeal." See also Bedross Der Matossian, "Ethnic Politics in the Post-Revolutionary Ottoman Empire: Armenians, Arabs, and Jews in the Second Constitutional Period (1908– 1909)" (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 2008).
- Michael A. Reynolds, "The Ottoman-Russian Struggle for Eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus (1908–1918)."

- 6. Mustafa Aksakal, *The Ottoman Road to War in 1914*. Justin McCarthy estimates that between 1821 and 1922 around 5.5 million Muslims were driven out of Europe and 5 million more were killed or died of disease and starvation while fleeing: Justin McCarthy, *Death and Exile*, 335–40.
- 7. Aksakal, The Ottoman Road to War in 1914.
- 8. Zafer Toprak, İttihat-Terakki ve Devletçilik, 224.
- 9. Reynolds, "The Ottoman-Russian Struggle for Eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus," 170–71. The source is Arkhiv Vnshnei Politiki Rossiiskoi Imperii/Archives of Foreign Policy of the Russian Empire (hereafter AVPRI), Report of the Translation Office of the Imperial Russian Embassy in Constantinople, March 23/April 4, 1911, fond "Posol'stvo v Konstantinopole," opis' 517/2, del' 3708, list' 108.
- Feroz Ahmad, "Unionist Relations with the Greek, Armenian, and Jewish Communities of the Ottoman Empire, 1908–1914," 422.
- 11. Reynolds, "The Ottoman-Russian Struggle for Eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus," 171. The source is AVPRI, Report of the Translation Office of the Imperial Russian Embassy in Constantinople, March 22/April 4, 1911, fond "Posol'stvo v Konstantinopole," opis' 517/2, del' 3708, list' 108. See also AVPRI, Letter from the General Consul in Erzurum to Girs, May 10/23, 1912, fond "Posol'stvo v Konstantinople," opis' 517/2, del' 3708, list' 150. "The chief of the Dashnak organization in Van was known to the Russians as a Russophobe, although this did not stop him from traveling among Armenians in Russia to raise money to buy arms for use against the Ottomans." AVPRI, Report of unnamed general staff colonel, January 7/20, 1913, fond "Posol'stvo v Konstantinopole," opis' 517/2, del' 3573, list' 7.
- 12. Sean McMeekin, The Russian Origins of the First World War, 142.
- 13. Ibid., 272n3.
- 14. Ibid.
- 15. Richard G. Hovannisian, Armenia on the Road to Independence, 1918; Richard Hovannisian and Simon Payaslian, eds., Armenian Cilicia; Jon Kirakosyan, Hayastane Michazgayin Divanagitutyan yev Sovetakan Artagin Kaghakakanutyan Pastatghterum; Arman Kirakosyan, Britanakan Divanagitutyune Yev Arevmtahayeri Khendire; Ruben K. Sahakyan, Turk Fransiakan Haraberutyunnere Yev Kilikian 1919–1921 T[vakannerun].
- 16. It is true that Hovannisian utilized the ARF Archives at the time. The archives were not yet catalogued in the 1960s, however, which made it almost impossible to do meaningful research in them (in fact, the archives are still in the cataloging process: even academics who were able to get to them during the 1990s and later are not able to do so at this time). The only substantial work that has been written on the period 1909 to 1914 by utilizing the ARF Archives is Kaligian, *Armenian Organization and Ideology*. It can be argued that Kaligian's book should have covered the "Russian angle." To be fair, he does mention some ARF archival materials on the ARF-CUP collaboration, especially those pertaining to Van, Erzurum, Bitlis, and Diyarbakır (Dikranagerd) during 1912 and 1913. The work falls short, however, in terms of uncovering any reticent collaboration between the two sides as documented in the Russian archives that Reynolds and McMeekin use. What renders the issue of not covering these associations somewhat problematic is that even the printed section of the ARF Archives contains telling indicators of this ARF-CUP

- collaboration. This chapter draws on these indicative pieces of information in weaving the narrative (as seen below).
- 17. It must be stressed, however, that McMeekin's account is general in nature and does not pursue the particularities of the case vis-à-vis Armenian archival material, because the language barrier represents yet another problem. But his concentration on Russian archival material to the detriment of its Ottoman counterpart (since he is knowledgeable in Ottoman Turkish) can only be construed as a deficiency of his general account.
- 18. McMeekin, The Russian Origins of the First World War, 172. The source is AVPRI, Letter from foreign minister to the ambassador in Constantinople, March 8/21, 1912, fond "Posol'stvo v Konstantinopole," opis' 517/2, del' 3562, list' 23. See also Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi/Prime Ministry Ottoman Archive in Istanbul (hereafter BOA), DH.MKT. 2736. 63. 2, Selmas kıt'asındaki ahalinin İran'da gordukleri zulum sebebiyle Hukumet-i Seniyye'ye dehalet eylediklerinden bahisle kabullerini istediklerinden, hududdan uzakca mahallerde arazi-i miriyeden idarelerine kafi ucretsiz arazi verilerek iskanları hususunda calısılacağının sehbenderlik vasıtasıyla kendilerine tebliği.
- 19. Secondary sources that deal with the period under discussion represent an important addition to the historiography of the era. This study was written based on primary archival material. The secondary literature includes Andre Amurian, H.H. Tashnagtsutyune Barsgasdanum, 1890–1918; Houri Berberian, Armenians and the Iranian Constitutional Revolution of 1905–1911; and Vartan Demirjian, ed., Divan Atrpatakani Hayots Patmutyan. Several archival documents from the ARF archives in Ottoman Turkish, Persian, and Armenian are also illustrative of these policies. See, for example, ARF Archives, Document No. 528b-18, Letter (Ottoman Turkish) from ARF Committee member Dr. Rupen Megerdichian to the Ottoman Shahbandar (consul general) of Khoy, dated September 15, 1909 (30 Shaaban 1327). See also ARF Archives, Document No. 528b-6 (Armenian, dated January 1, 1908), 528b-6 (Persian), 528b-17 (Persian, dated September 14, 1909), 528b-9 (Persian), 583-1a (Armenian, dated January 5, 1908), 583-2 (Armenian, dated January 11, 1908), 475-11 (Armenian, dated August 22, 1908), 478-134 (Persian), and 478-135 (Persian).
- ARF Archives, Document No. 78 a-1, Nyuter, vol. 8, Report of Western Bureau [to ARF Sixth General Congress] regarding relations with CUP, 1909–11, 148.
- 21. Ibid. Unfortunately, the "letters from Van regarding Kadri Bey's stance toward the ARF" mentioned in the quotation above are not found in the printed volume of the ARF Archives.
- Great Britain, National Archives (formerly Public Record Office), Foreign Office Papers, London (hereafter FO) 424/219/15584, Dickson to Lowther, Van, March 31, 1909, No. 4, enclosure in Lowther to Grey, Constantinople, April 20, 1909, No. 62, 289.
- 23. FO 424/222/5151, Lowther to Grey, Constantinople, February 7, 1910, No. 69, 78.
- Reynolds, "The Ottoman Russian Struggle for Eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus," 93.
- 25. Samson Harutyunian (Aroutyunian), a leading member of the Persia Section of the ARF, had assumed a pivotal role in the arms manufacturing and smuggling

- operation to Van via Salmast since the early 1890s. In late 1914 he became president of the Armenian National Council in Tbilisi. N. Hankuyts (Nigol Aghpalian), "Samsoni Hushere."
- 26. Rostom (Stepan Zorian), *Namagani*, Letter No. 303, ARF Archive No. 98-2, to comrades in the Caucasus, dated May 26, 1909, 448–49. Regarding the Ottoman fear that the 1907 Russo-British Agreement gave Russia the upper hand in northern Iran, see Askeri Tarih ve Stratejik Etüt Başkanlığı Arşivi/Turkish General Staff Military History Archives, Ankara (hereafter ATASE), KI: 1488, Ds: 32, Fh: 3/14. The Ottoman reports indicate that because of this agreement Russian consuls in northern Iran had a free hand in terms of arming and bribing the Kurdish tribes against the Ottoman state (Simko, born Ismail Ağa Şikak, and Abdürrezak Bedirhan). They had a similar project for the Assyrians (Nestorians): ATASE, Arşiv KI: 1488, Ds: 32, Fh: 3/1. On Simko's admission that he had taken money and arms as a bribe for his pro-Russian oriantation, see ATASE, Arşiv KI: 1488, Ds; 32, Fh: 3/15. In this regard see also BOA, DH.MKT. 2645.67.2, İranlı memurların Osmanlı Lence Şehbenderhanesi'ne yaptıkları saldırıdan ve Şehbenderhanedeki Osmanlı sancağını indirmekten dolayı ozur dilemezlerse Osmanlı İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti tarafından mukabelede bulunulacağına dair Basra Vilayeti'nden alınan telgrafla ilgili olarak gerekenin yapılmasının Hariciye Nezareti'nden istenmesi. Hariciye Nezareti tarafından gereken yapılıncaya kadar bir mesele cıkmasına meydan verilmemesinin Basra Valiliği'ne tavsiye edilmesi, 1326. L 8.
- 27. BOA, BEO. 3483.261174.2. Selmas kıtasında sakin ahalinin İran'da gordukleri zulum sebebiyle kabul-i dehaletleri hakkında Selmas İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti ile Encumen-i Mufettis-i Milli ve Fırka-I Mucahidin imzalarıyla gonderilen telgrafname uzerine icra olunacak muamele (Hariciye, Dahiliye), 1327, M 10.
- 28. Ethnic elements referred to here included Tatar (Azeri) Muslims in the Caucasus, Georgians, and even Ukrainians.
- 29. Yeprem Tavitian (aka Taparagan) was a famous ARF partisan fighter in the Persian revolution, whose forces were the first to enter Tehran and then Tabriz in 1909.
- 30. ARF Archives, Document 584-14, ARF Kilan-Enzel (Port Arthur) Committee to ARF Western Bureau, in *Nyuter*, vol. 7, 333.
- 31. ARF Archives, Document 584-20, ARF Kilan-Enzel Committee [Port Arthur] to ARF Western Bureau, 334. Vertsin's real name remains unknown.
- 32. Rostom, *Namagani*, Letter No. 304, ARF 476-127; unfinished, May 1909, 450-51.
- 33. Ibid., Letter No. 307, to Yeprem [Khan], July 26, 1909, 453–54.
- 34. Ibid., Letter No. 335, 107-44, from Rostom (ARF Western Bureau, Turkey Section) to ARF Persia, February 22, 1910, 485–86. Ahmed Bey Aghayev (real name Ahmet Ağaoğlu) was a prominent Tatar/Turkish publicist and journalist. He is recognized as one of the founders of pan-Turkism and played an important role in trying to prevent ethnic clashes between Armenians and Tatars in Transcaucasia between 1905 and 1906. Ağaoğlu was also one of the champions of the Iranian constitutional revolution, who worked for that cause through his ties with the CUP. Karabek Karabekov was an Azeri intellectual and socialist revolutionary associated with Ağaoğlu.
- 35. Rostom, *Namagani*, Letter No. 308, 193-163, most probably summer or fall of 1909, 454-55.

- 36. İsmail Simko, a Kurdish chieftain of the Shikak tribe in Urmia, Iran, was playing both the Ottomans and the Russians but was most definitely in the employ of the Russians at the time.
- 37. ARF Archives, document 776-68, Report from ARF "Minaret" (Salmast) Region, January 1908 to June 1909, in *Nyuter*, vol. 7, 315–30.
- 38. Ibid.
- 39. Ibid.
- 40. The Ahrars were the party that Prince Sabahaddin had formed. They were supposed to be a party for all Ottomans regardless of ethnicity. The organization was dissolved as a reaction to Sabahaddin's's siding with the counter-revolutionary forces in the March 31, 1909 events.
- 41. Rostom, *Namagani*, Letter No. 315, 198-160, to Troshag Headquarters in Geneva, November 4, 1909, 463–64.
- 42. Ibid., Letter No. 316, 57-191, to ARF USA Bodies, December 1, 1909, 464-65. By this time Rostom also had been appointed as an inspector of Armenian schools in Erzurum. He was to act in this capacity until 1914, when World War I broke out. Rostom's presence in Erzurum was important, because he was to coordinate all ARF-CUP clandestine activity vis-à-vis Iran and later in the eastern vilayets. For this reason Rostom was furious that the Western Bureau had unilaterally made the decision to cut off relations with the CUP in 1912. It seems that the ARF leader was not in a position to divulge everything regarding his clandestine operations to the ARF Western Bureau leaders in Constantinople.
- 43. Rostom, *Namagani*, Letter No. 399, 101-28, to ARF comrades in Iran, April 27, 1912, 560–61; Letter No. 400, 101-30, to ARF Western Bureau, April 29, 1912, 561–62.
- Ibid., Letter No. 319, to M[ikayel] Varandian [Troshag Headquarters, Geneva], December 9, 1909, 467–68.
- 45. Ibid., Letter No. 403, 101-40, to ARF comrades in Iran, May 21, 1912, 565-66.
- 46. Nikol Tuman (real name Nikoghos Ter Hovannisian, 1867–1914) was an ARF military/revolutionary leader who assumed an active military role during the Iranian constitutional movement.
- 47. Rostom, *Namagani*, Letter No. 395, to Simon Vratsian (Boston, USA), January 22, 1912, 554–56.
- 48. Ibid., Letter No. 352, to Aknuni [Khachatur Malumian], August 12, 1910, 506–7.
- 49. Ibid., Letter No. 396, 101-4, to ARF Western Bureau, January 26, 1912, 556-58.
- 50. Ibid., Letter No. 380, 100-52, to ARF Constantinople Responsible Body, February/March 16, 1911, 533.
- 51. Reynolds, "The Ottoman-Russian Struggle for Eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus," 171. The source is AVPRI, letter from the foreign minister to Charykov, March 10/23, 1910, 10.3.1910, fond "Posol'stvo v Konstantinopole," opis' 517/2, del' 3562, list' 68.
- 52. BOA, Consular Section of the Foreign Ministry to the Interior Ministry, 26.1.1328 [February 8, 1912]; copy of telegram from the Hoy [Khoy] Consul Sedat Bey of 10.3.1328 [March 23, 1912], DH.SYS D. 13 S. 5, Ff. 2, 22. See also AVPRI, secret telegram from Vorontsov-Dashkov, March 13/26, 1912, fond "Posol'stvo v Konstantinopole," opis' 517/2, del' 3562, list' 27; cited in Michael A. Reynolds, *Shattering*

- *Empires*, 260; cited in Reynolds, "The Ottoman-Russian Struggle for Eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus," 172–73.
- 53. Reynolds, "The Ottoman-Russian Struggle for Eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus," 173. The source is AVPRI, copy of confidential dispatch of the vice consul in Khoy to the Imperial Emissary in Tehran, March 23/April 5, 1912, fond "Posol'stvo v Konstantinopole," opis' 517/2, del' 3562, list' 74–75.
- 54. Reynolds, "The Ottoman-Russian Struggle for Eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus," 174. The source is AVPRI, secret telegram of court counselor Preobrazhensky in Tabriz, March 30/April 12, 1912, fond "Posol'stvo v Konstantinopole," opis' 517/2, del' 3562, list' 45.
- 55. Reynolds, "The Ottoman-Russian Struggle for Eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus," 175. The source is AVPRI, minister of foreign affairs to the Russian emissary in Tehran, March 19/April 2, 1912, fond "Posol'stvo v Konstantinopole," opis' 517/2, del' 3562, list' 33. See also AVPRI, copy of confidential dispatch of the vice consul in Hoy to the imperial emissary in Tehran, March 23/April 5, 1912, fond "Posol'stvo v Konstantinopole," opis' 517/2, del' 3562, list' 75–76.
- 56. AVPRI, report of court counselor Olferiev, March 18/31, 1913, fond "Posol'stvo Konstantinopole," opis' 517/2, del' 3573, list' 53–54. See also AVPRI, manager [upravliaiuschii] of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the ambassador in Constantinople and the emissary in Tehran, July 19/August 2, 1912, fond "Posol'stvo v Konstantinopole," opis' 517/2, del' 3562, list' 140. Cited in Reynolds, "The Ottoman-Russian Struggle for Eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus," 176.
- 57. This is amply illustrated in British consular reports emanating from Van. See, for example, FO 195/2284, Dickson to Lowther, Van, September 30, 1908; FO 195/2284, Dickson to Lowther, Van, November 3, 1908; FO 195/2475, Molyneux-Seel to Marling, Van, January 9, 1911.
- 58. FO 424/216, Lowther to Grey, No. 498. Therapia, August 18, 1908; cited in Janet Klein, "Power in the Periphery."
- FO 195/2347, Safrastian to McGregor, Bitlis, April 28, 1910; FO 195/2347,
 McGregor to Lowther, No. 44. Erzurum, July 2, 1910.
- 60. The reason for the Kurds' Russian orientation was the cognizance that in case of war the Ottoman state would lose against Russia: thus it was better to side with the victors. See AVPRI 51, ll. 38, Caucasian Military Central Command, transcript of a ciphered telegram, February 8, 1913; AVPRI, 55, ll. 24 ob-242, Bitlis, Shirkov to K. N. Gulkevich Report, February 12, 1914.
- 61. Rostom, *Namagani*, Letter No. 308, 193-163, to ARF Constantinople Responsible Body, probably summer or fall of 1909, 454–55.
- 62. Ibid., Letter No. 321, to Simon Vratsian, 1909[?], 469-70.
- 63. Ibid. For more regarding the anti-Armenian manipulations of Bedirhan and the other Kurdish tribal leaders in northern Iran and in the eastern provinces, see also "Brozhenie v Kurdistane," Sopredelnikh Stranakh Svodka Svedenii, Dobith Razvedkoi za 1go Vremya PO 15–OE Maya 1913 g., No. 46, Tbilisi, 1913, 9. See also AVPRI, f. "Posol'stvo v Konstantinopole," 1912–14, D. 3573, ll. ob 236, Hoy Russian consul to Istanbul Russian Embassy, Hidden Department Report, December 22, 1913;. See also AVPRI, same place, no. ll, 236; and also, AVPRI, same place, ll. 226, secret wire from Caucasus, December 2/16, 1913. See also AVPRI, same place, ll. 231-236, to the Hoy Russian Consulate from Russian Ministry of Foreign

- Affairs, copy to Constantinople Russian Embassy, Secret Departmental Report, December 22, 1913; See also AVPRI, same place, ll. 23, Shirkov from Tehran, Reliable Confidential Report, February 14, 1914. The source for these Ottoman and Russian documents is İsrafil Kurtcephe and Suat Akgül, "Rusya'nın Birinci Dünya Savası Öncesinde Kürt Aşiretleri Üzerindeki Faaliyetleri," *OTAM* (Journal of the Center for Ottoman Studies), No. 7 (Ankara 1996).
- 64. F. Kashani-Sabet, Frontier Fictions, 153.
- 65. Rostom, Namagani, Letter No. 367, 1736-18, to Mik[ayel] Varantian, Erzurum, 1910[?]. See also Letter No. 451–52; No. 373, 1736-16; and BOA, BEO, 3576. 268128. 2. Bitlis merkezinde İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti'nin harekatından şikayeti havi mesayih, ulema ve ahali adına Abdulgaffar Fethi'nin telegrafının gonderildiği (Meclis-i Mebusan; 267673), 1327, Ca 27.
- 66. Rostom, *Namagani*, Letter No. 367, 1736-18, to Mik[ayel] Varantian, Erzurum, 1910 [?]. See also Letters 451–52; No. 373, 1736-16, to Mikayel Varantian, Erzurum, 1910 or 1911 [?], 529–32; No. 383, to Simon Zavarian [Muş], April 8, 1911, 542–43; No. 396, 101-4, to ARF Western Bureau, January 26, 1912, 556–58; No. 412, to Simon Vratsian, October 10, 1912, 577–78; No. 413, to Simon Vratsian, October 14, 1912, 578–79.
- ARF Archives, Document 1541-22 (the minutes of the entire proceedings of the ARF Sixth General World Congress are under the same document number), Nyuter, vol. 8, 4–5.
- 68. Nyuter, vol. 8, 127-28.
- 69. Ibid. This decision of the congress was to become a point of contention in 1912.
- 70. For ARF participation in the CUP General Congress of 1913 and the Armenian perspective regarding the congress, see BOA, DH.SYS. 53. 7. 4, İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti Nizamnamesi; yapılan konferans neticesinde alınan kararlar ve Ermeni murahhasası efendinin bazı ifadeleri, 1329, RA 01.
- 71. For more information regarding the ARF Seventh World General Congress, see Kaligian, *Armenian Organization and Ideology*, 193–94.
- Reynolds, "The Ottoman-Russian Struggle for Eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus," 91.
- 73. Klein, "Power in the Periphery," 258–59, 263. The source is FO 424/225, Matthews to Lowther, No. 50, Diyarbakır, October 19, 1910. It must be noted that the land grab issue was something that developed during the reign of Abdülhamid after 1890. Thus Klein errs by mentioning that the Berlin Treaty contained language regarding land reform in the treaty. It must also be underlined, however, that even by 1910 no tangible results had been achieved regarding "agrarian reform" in the eastern vilayets.
- 74. This analogy is important here. Abdürrezak Bedirhan did in fact pursue a program of administrative autonomy for an envisioned Kurdistan as well as educational and linguistic freedom akin to the aims of the Albanian Revolution of 1910–12. This of course pitted the central Ottoman government against such Kurdish ambitions. See, for example, FO 195/2375, McGregor to Lowther, No. 46, Confidential, Erzurum, June 28, 1911; Safrastian to McGregor, No. 20, Bitlis, July 11, 1911.
- 75. Hasan Cuni, Abdurrezak Bedirhan Otobayografya (n.p., n.d.). This short autobiography of Abdürrezak Bedirhan Bey consists of two documents, mostly written by himself in French (the files contain only the Russian translation of the originals).

- They were written by Abdürrezak himself at the behest of Russian authorities in Tbilisi, at the time when he collaborated with them. The documents are SGIA Gruz. SSR, Original No. 15, Dossier No. 1, vol. No. 310; and AVPRI, "Persidskii, Stol-B," 1912–14, fond 489, opis' 568. The first document is about Bedirhan's activities until 1910, while the second covers his activities for the years 1910 to 1916, when he was told by the Russian Tbilisi command that his services were no longer needed.
- 76. The issues pertaining to the Kurdish disturbances against the Ottoman government are discussed in many British diplomatic reports. See especially FO 371/1263, Molyneux-Seel to Lowther, Van, October 31, 1911; FO 371/2449, Molyneux-Steel to Lowther, Van, May 8, 1913; FO 195/2458, Smith to Maller, Van, July 11, 1914; FO 881/9548, Dickson to Lowther, Van, June 15, 1909. This last diplomatic dispatch is important, because it explains that Kurdish sheikhs had been touring the regions of southern Van and northern Mosul since the CUP took power in 1908. They aroused the tribes by claiming that Kurdish lands (those that were taken over throughout the Hamidian era) would be given back to Christians (Armenians, Assyrians, and Nestorians) unless the Kurds opposed the government.
- 77. McMeekin, *The Russian Origins of the First World War*, 148–49. The sources are AVPRI, fond 180, opis' 517/2, del' 3573, list' 1, Muraviev [?] to Tiflis command, from Urmia, January 7/20, 1913, report on activities of December 15 to 31, 1912; AVPRI, fond 180, opis' 517/2, del' 3573, list' 17, Orlov to Girs, February 14/27, 1913.
- 78. McMeekin, *The Russian Origins of the First World War*, 149. The source is AVPRI, fond 180, opis' 517/2, del' 3573, list' 17, Orlov to De Giers, February 14/27, 1913.
- 79. ARF Archives, Document 1543-24, Nyuter, vol. 8, 231-37.
- 80. Ibid., Document 671-5, Shamil (aka Sarkis of Van) Boghos Parseghian-Odabashian to Rostom, date unknown), *Nyuter*, vol. 8, 238–40.
- 81. Rostom, *Namagani*, Letter No. 404, 101-47, to ARF Constantinople Responsible Body, June 17, 1912, 566–67.
- 82. Ibid., Letter No. 408, 101-65, July 27, 1912, 571–72; Letter No. 424, to Mikayel Varantian, Geneva, March 9, 1913, 588–89.
- 83. Ibid., Letter No. 409, 101-59, ARF Western Bureau, Constantinople, July 29, 1912, 572-74.
- 84. Rostom's analysis of the political situation of the time was correct and to the point, as corroborated by current scholarship. See Hasan Kayalı, *Arabs and Young Turks*; Isa Blumi, *Reinstating the Ottomans*; idem, *Rethinking the Late Ottoman Empire*. It is unclear, however: if the aim was to create an independent state for other Muslim nationalities in the empire, such as Arabs and Albanians, then why were the Armenians still advocating Armenian self-rule or decentralization as late as 1914? Although eastern Armenians were outright advocates of the annexation of the eastern provinces to Russia (still not outright independence), it seems that western Armenians (and the analogy here is that Rostom himself was of eastern Armenian extraction) still advocated that their umbilical cord to the Ottoman state could not be severed. This speaks volumes about the issue at hand.
- 85. Rostom, *Namagani*, Letter No. 410, 101-60, to ARF Constantinople Responsible Body, August 5, 1912, 574–75; Letter No. 414, 101-60, to Simon Vratsian, December 16, 1912, 579–80.

- 86. Ibid., Letter No. 432, May 12, 1912, 595-96.
- 87. The reference is probably to Talat, who was instructed by the Ottoman government in Erzurum to start his visit to the eastern provinces from Erzurum in order to appease Armenians and also send a strong signal to the Kurds.
- 88. Rostom, Namagani, Letter No. 443, 1913, 608.
- 89. McMeekin, *The Russian Origins of the First World War*, 150. The sources are AVPRI, fond 180, opis' 517/2, del' 3573, list' 326–27 and backs of letter of Zaven der Yeghiaian, the Armenian bishop of Bitlis (later Armenian patriarch of Constantinople), to Russian consul Chirkov, dated March 3/17, 1914; AVPRI, fond 180, opis' 517/2, del' 3573, list' 191, Chirkov to De Giers from Van, May 30/June 12, 1913. The incident is also mentioned in the ARF Archives.
- 90. In this regard, see FO 195/2456; FO 424/251, Smith to Mallet, No. 1, Van, January 10, 1914.
- 91. McMeekin, *The Russian Origins of the First World War*, 149–50. The source is AVPRI, fond 180, opis' 517/2, del' 3573, list' 53–55, Olferiev to Girs, March 18/31, 1913.
- 92. See the following Ottoman archival documents regarding the Molla Selim rebellion: ATASE, Arşiv KI: 1488, Ds; 32, Fh: 3/1–2; BOA, DHSFR 422,135; 74
 BOA, DHSFR, 423.5. See also the following Russian archival documents: AVPRI, "Posol'stvo v Konstantinopole," Akimovich to Zinovev Confidential Report, April 12, 1909, D. 1401 B, ll. 5; AVPRI, 1914, same place, Shirkov to Charikova, Bitlis, November 30, 1909, D. 1406, 1157–58; AVPRI, same place, Syria General Consulate to M. N. Girse, June 6, 1914, ll. 346; AVPRI, same, Kirsanov to Constantinople Russian Embassy, encrypted telegram, February 8, 1913, 52, same place, 11. 37, Shirkov's report from Bitlis, March 20, 1913, 53, 11. 72; AVPRI, same place, Bitlis, Shirkov to K. N. Gulkevich, Report, February 12, 1914, 54, II. 241; AVPRI, same place, secret telegram from Constantinople, March 27, 1914, D. 3312, II. 2; AVPRI, same place, secret telegram from Constantinople, March 27, 1914, Subat 12, 61, 112; AVPRI, same place, Bitlis, from Shirkov to M. N. Girse, March 7, 1914, D. 3573, ll. 271, 272.
- 93. İkdam 6151, April 7, 1914.
- 94. The Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa (Special Organization) was probably organized in 1913 after the CUP triumvirate of Talat, Enver, and Cemal took over the government through a forceful coup in January 1913. The paramilitary organization was to serve as the intelligence-gathering wing of the new CUP government and was organized on the model of other European intelligence agencies. The formation of such a department presumably was on the recommendation of the British ambassador, Stratford Canning. Enver Paşa assumed the primary role in the direction of this Special Organization. Its center of administration moved to Erzurum when Behaettin Şakir moved there in the second half of 1914. Şakir altered the organization by absorbing dubious and even criminal elements (*başibozuk*) within its ranks, who were subservient only to him. The organization was later involved in the administration of deportations of Armenians in 1915. See Recep Maraşlı, "Enver Paşa, Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa'nın yönetilip yönlendirilmesinde birinci derecede rol üstlenmişti," in *Ermeni Ulusal Demokratik Hareketi ve 1915 Soykurımı* (n.p.: Pêrî Yayınları, 2008), 252.

- 95. Stanford J. Shaw, The Ottoman Empire in World War I, 430. Shaw's assessment could be somewhat exaggerated, because it is now known that the impact of the Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa did not go beyond Batumi.
- 96. Roderic H. Davison, "The Armenian Crisis: 1912–1914."
- Vahan Papazian, Im Hushere, 181. See also Rober Koptaş, "Zohrab, Papazyan ve Pastırmacıyan'ın Kaleminden," 175–92.
- 98. Papazian, *Im Hushere*, 227. The source is *Azkayin Zhoghovi Adenakrutyun 1913 Amya*.
- 99. Krikor Zohrab, "Orakrutyun"; Koptaş, "Zohrab, Papazyan ve Pastırmacıyan'ın Kaleminden," 178.
- 100. Said Halim was not aware, however, that Great Britain had already committed itself to Russia. Asquith, the British prime minister, had a "strong opinion" that it was only a question of time before the instability and "rottenness of the Turkish Empire would bring about her downfall in Asia, and that Britain ought to face these possibilities." Bodleian Library (Oxford), MS Asquith 7, f 54, [British] Cabinet Meeting, July 9, 1913; Tigran N. Saroukhanyan, "British Documents on the Committee of Union and Progress," 175. This shows, if anything, the lack of knowledge about the CUP of the British prime minister and his administration. British Documents on the Origins of War, 1898–1914, vol. 10 (London, 1936), 430.
- 101. AVPRI, fond 172, opis' 514/2, del' 633, list' 2, Neratov to Girs, copies to Paris and London, May 21/June 2, 1913.
- 102. AVPRI, manager [*upravliaiuschii*] of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the ambassador in Constantinople and the emissary in Tehran, July 19/August 2, 1912. fond "Posol'stvo v Konstantinopole," opis' 517/2, del' 3562, list' 140; AVPRI, report of court counselor Olferiev, March 18/31, 1913, fond "Posol'stvo v Konstantinopole," opis' 517/2, del' 3573, list' 53-54.
- 103. Österreichisches Staatsarchiv/Austrian State Archives, Archives of the Habsburg Empire, Vienna (hereafter HAPA), Vienna 209, no. 32/P–D, April 29, 1915, Istanbul, Ambassador Pallavicini to István Count Burián, foreign minister of the Habsburg Empire (in German); cross-reference: Artem Ohandjanian, Österreich-Armenian 1872–1936: Faksimliesammlung diplomatischer Akenstüche (Vienna, 1995), vol. 6 (1914–15), document no. 1002, 4548.; cited also in İnanc Atılgan and Garabet Moumdjian, Archival Documents of the Viennese Armenian Turkish Platform (VAT). See also Cuni, Abdurrezak Bedirhan Otobayografya. Çete is an Ottoman word used to denote an irregular fighter.
- 104. Krikor Zohrab, member of parliament from Constantinople, was a noted jurist and writer.
- 105. Karekin Pastermajian (aka Armen Garo or Karo) and Vartkes Serengulian Efendi were members of the Ottoman parliament from Erzurum.
- 106. This was the location of the ARF daily newspaper offices and the ARF Center for Constantinople.
- 107. Vahan Papazian, "Hamashkharhayin Baderazme yev Daroni Ashkharhe," 3-5.
- 108. Notice the difference in the number of members of the committee. Minakhorian states that it was composed of nine members.
- 109. Simon Vratsian, Hayasdani Hanrabedutyune, 8.
- 110. Ibid.

- 111. Armen Garo was one of the members of the ARF paramilitary group that seized the Ottoman Bank in 1896. At the time he was a member of the Ottoman parliament from Erzurum.
- 112. Vahan Minakhorian, 1915 Tvakane, 64-69.
- 113. Ibid. Ruben Ter Minassian was the leader of the ARF fighters in Sasun from 1904 until the declaration of the constitution in 1908, after which he went to Europe to continue his graduate studies. He was a graduate of a Russian military academy with the rank of lieutenant and had amassed important experience as a partisan leader during his tenure in Sasun.
- 114. As seen below, this pro-Russian propaganda was administered by the Mshakists. Their mouthpiece, Mshak, was an Armenian newspaper that had catered to the Armenian bourgeoisie/capitalist class (monarchists) for decades. Hence the ARF, the Hunchaks, and any other western Armenian entity could not really change this status quo in the Caucasus.
- 115. Justin McCarthy, Esat Arslan, Cemalettin Taşkıran, Ömer Turan, *The Armenian Rebellion at Van*, 182.
- 116. It is interesting to note that the source for this statement is Esat Uras, *The Armenians in History and the Armenian Question*, 841–42.
- 117. What McCarthy et al. call the "Armenian rebellion at Van" is presented by the Armenian memoirists as "the self-defense battles at Van." Regarding Vramian's death, according to Patriarch Zaven der Yeghiaian, he was killed by Abdülhalik in Bitlis. Der Yeghiayan, My Patriarchal Memoirs, 61.
- 118. Vahan Papazian also presents what Aknuni and others made him privy to after his return from Garin to Constantinople.
- Arshak Vramian was a leading ARF figure and member of the Ottoman parliament from Van.
- 120. Agnuni was a leading ARF member and the chair of the ARF Constantinople Responsible Body (Bolso Badaskhanadu Marmin).
- 121. Simon Vratsian later became prime minister of independent Armenia. He is also the author of *Hayasdani Hanrabedutyune*, the first meticulous study regarding the period of the first Armenian Republic, 1918–20.
- 122. Minakhorian, 1915 Tvakane, 69-71.
- 123. Rosdom, *Namagani*, Letter No. 451, August 24, 1914, to the Constantinople Responsible Body, ARF Archives number 103-32, (four small pages), 617.
- 124. Papazian, "Hamashkharhayin Baderazme yev Daroni Ashkharhe," 4.
- 125. Vratsian, Hayasdani Hanrabedutyune, 8.
- 126. Ibid.
- 127. Ibid., 8-9.
- 128. Ibid., 9.
- 129. Ibid.
- Ruben Ter Minassian, Hay Heghapokhagani Me Hishadagnere, 3rd ed., vol. 7 (Tehran: n.p., 1982), 126–27.
- 131. Although several Armenian sources mention the remark of Tsar Nicholas II, none gives a concrete primary archival document. See, for example, Krikor Tchalghushian, La livre rouge, 11–12; Edvard Chopurian, Medz Baterazme yev Hay Zhoghovurte, 15.

- 132. Ter Minassian, Hay Heghapokhagani, 126-27.
- 133. Reynolds, "The Ottoman-Russian Struggle for Eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus," 372–73. The sources are AVPRI, secret telegram from the ambassador in Constantinople, September 6/19,, fond "Politarkhiv," opis' 482, del' 4104, list' 285; Wolfdieter Bihl, *Die Kaukasus-Politik der Mittelmächte*, vol. 1 (Vienna: Hermann Böhlaus, 1975), 58, 66–67.
- 134. ATASE, Arşiv KI: 1488, Ds: 32, Fh: 3/4, 3/5. See also BOA, HR.SYS. 2879. 27. 1. 9, 1915 06 04.

An important source in this case is Yektan Türkyılmaz, "Rethinking Genocide: Violence and Victimhood in Eastern Anatolia: 1913–1915" (Ph.D. dissertation, Duke University, 2011). Chapters 3 and 4 are a must-read. The only problem is that Türkyılmaz puts too much weight on newspaper editorials in determining ARF policy vis-à-vis the Armenian volunteer units. There is one caveat: as a historical anthropologist, Türkyılmaz utilizes the editorials appearing in *Horizon*, the ARF organ of the Eastern Bureau of the organization. Unfortunately, not having access to the ARF archival material or all of the memoirs of knowledgeable ARF leaders pertinent to the period discussed, Türkyılmaz's narrative suffers in constructing a more accurate historiography of the events. Therefore his analysis must be read with a pinch of salt as to its accuracy.

- 135. Reynolds, "The Ottoman-Russian Struggle for Eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus," 375. The source is F. I. Eliseev, Kazaki na Kavkazskom Fronte (Moscow: Voenizdat, 2001), 85. Gen. Gabriel Gorganian wrote a history of the Armenian military role in World War I that was published under the title "Armenian Participation in World War I on the Caucasian Front" in several installments in the Armenian Review.
- 136. Hovannisian, Armenia on the Road to Independence, 44; Manug Somakian, Empires in Conflict, 74–75; Gorganian, "Armenian Participation in WWI."
- 137. Mar was the pseudonym of ARF leader Mikayel Ter Mardirosian.
- 138. Sarkis Minasian was a community leader, publicist, editor, and teacher.
- 139. Papazian, "Hamashkharhayin Baderazme," 3-5.
- 140. Garegin Khajak (aka Garegin Chakalian).
- 141. Papazian, "Hamashkharhayin Baderazme," 3-9.
- 142. On this matter immediate negotiations with the Russian government were proposed, getting its agreement and receiving the necessary military assistance.
- 143. Papazian, "Hamashkharhayin Baderazme," 3-9.
- 144. Ibid.
- 145. Ibid.
- 146. Der Yeghiayan, My Patriarchal Memoirs, 33.
- 147. The quotation is from Mehmet Perinçek, Rus Devlet Arşivlerinden 150 Belgede Ermeni Meselesi (Istanbul: n.p., 2007). Perinçek argues that the declaration attributed to Patriarch Zaven is from the following Russian archival document: Armenian SSR State Central History Archives (Khorherdayin Hayastani Betakan Arkhiv, Yerevan, Armenia) (TsGİA Arm. SSR), fond vipisok, folder 37, sheet 45–46, cited in K. N. Karamyan, Polozhenie zapadnykh Armian, "Armianskii Vopros" i mezhdunarodnaia diplomatiia v poslednei chetverti XIX veka i nachale XX veka (Yerevan: Yerevanskii Gosudarstvennii Universitet, 1972), 87.

- 148. See, for example Dajar 13 (Constantinople, 1914): 290.
- 149. It is clear that Perinçek fell prey to his own scheme in terms of utilizing dubious Russian archival material that he claims he found when more reputable historians such as Reynolds and McMeekin have found no such archival material during their research in the Russian archives or did not give such documents the attention that Perinçek gave them.
- 150. Antranig Toros Ozanian (Antranik Toros Ozanyan).
- 151. Papazian, "Hamashkharhayin Baderazme," 3-9.
- 152. Malkhas was a seasoned ARF leader who had joined the revolutionary movement at an early stage. His Constantinople and subsequent Tbilisi meetings are documented in *Hayrenik* 6 (Boston, August 1942). See also Ashod Nersisyan, *Ho.Hi. Tashnagtsutyan Badmutyun*, 1908–1918, 155–58.
- 153. This is extremely interesting: if Armen Garo stated that the Western Bureau of the ARF had decided that it was in favor of the formation of such units, this means that the ARF Western Bureau was in direct violation of the decisions of the party's Eighth General Congress. Moreover, Türkyılmaz does not supply a source for Armen Garo's statement, which in itself is problematic. It must also be noted that per the regulations of the ARF all party bodies' mandates were frozen prior to the General Congress, because the bodies were considered to be dissolved. Therefore a dissolved Western Bureau had no power in taking a position vis-à-vis the Armenian volunteer units (the same can be said of the Eastern Bureau). If Armen Garo did confide such a decision of the Western Bureau to Malkhas this clearly could only be construed as his own wish and opinion. Other members of the Western Bureau such as Kachaznuni and Hrach Tiryakian were against the formation of said units, and several envoys were sent to Tiflis to convey this message to the Eastern Bureau.
- 154. Türkyılmaz, "Rethinking Genocide," 239-41.
- 155. Leo, *Antsyalits* (Yerevan: Pahpanoghakan Kusaktsutyan "Shem" Hratarakchutyun, 2009), 278. Cited also in Türkyılmaz, "Rethinking Genocide," 241.
- 156. Türkyılmaz, "Rethinking Genocide," 241.
- Garo Sassouni, Terkahayasdane A[rachin] Ashkharhamardi Entatskum, 1914–1918,
 32.
- 158. M. A. Hasratyan, S. F. Oreshkova, and Y. A. Petrosyan, *Turkiyayi Patmutyan Urvagtser* (n.p., n.d.). See also Jon Kirakosyan, *Arajin Hamashkharhayin Paterazme yev Arevmtahayutyune* (Yerevan: Hayastan, 1967), 244.
- 159. Simon Vratsian, *Kyanki Oughinerov*, Vol. 3 in 6 vols. (Beirut: Hamazkayine Vahe Setian Press, 1963), 27
- 160. The number of volunteers differs. Boghos Nubar Paşa and Russian sources give higher figures. See Vatche Ghazarian, Boghos Nubar's Papers on the Armenian Question, 1915–1918 (Waltham, Mass.: Mayreni Publishers, 1997).
- 161. Feroz Ahmad, "The Late Ottoman Empire," 18, 31; see also Aksakal, *The Ottoman Road to War in 1914*, 1–2.
- 162. ATASE, KLS.528.ED.1029.YD 2061.FH 21 (1–18), vol. 1, 408–18; also cited in Atılgan and Moumdjian, *Archival Documents of VAT*.
- 163. ATASE, KLS.528.ED.1029.YD 2061.FH 21 (1-18), vol. 1.
- 164. ATASE, KLS.528.ED.1029.YD 2062.FH 21, vol. 1, 408-18.

- 165. BOA, DH.SYS D. 3 S. 7 F. 2–3, 14 Agustos 1327 [August 27, 1914], Report of Jandarma Captain Nazim Efendi.
- 166. BOA, Dahiliye Şifre (DH. ŞFR), No. 14/119, in Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler, 6.
- 167. Mehmet Beşikçi, The Ottoman Mobilization of Manpower in the First World War. This book offers a multifaceted story of how the Ottoman Empire tried to cope with the challenges of permanent mobilization under total war conditions and hence the high rate of desertion from the Ottoman army in general.

The Eighth World Congress of the Dashnaktsutyun and Its Aftermath

Onur Önol

On July 27, 1914, the Dutch inspector Louis C. Westenenk was having a word with the Ottoman minister of the interior, Talat Bey, on the final details of his mission to Erzurum as the general inspector for one of the two administrative sections formed by the Armenian reforms. His Norwegian colleague, Nicolas Hoff, had already set off on a Russian boat. While worrying about the hotel bills incurred during this waiting, Westenenk received a letter from Talat Bey on August 10 that effectively postponed his assignment and the implementation of the whole project.¹

At about the same time the Dashnaktsutyun, the most influential Armenian political party, was holding its Eighth World Congress in Erzurum, an important fortress city with a sizable Armenian minority. Erzurum had been chosen to host this convention for the second time. The delegates convened in Sanasarian College had critical questions to discuss amid the news of war and mobilization. These discussions and the eventual resolutions of the congress along with the subsequent meetings of the Dashnak delegation with the CUP emissaries have been a contentious subject in the works concerning various aspects of the Turco-Armenian conflict.²

In July-August 1914 the Dashnaks were put in a position to decide what to do in case of a war between the Ottoman Empire and tsarist Russia, which was very probable. Both the Eighth World Congress and the Dashnak commission that negotiated with the CUP delegation declared a neutral stance in regard to the party attitude toward the war, which would mean that Ottoman and Russian Armenians would perform their military duty as required by their countries. The resolutions of the congress about the war, however, were not the final word for the ultimate

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party strategy. Having rejected the CUP offer to incite rebellion against the Russian Empire, the leaders of the Dashnaktsutyun were still exploring their options in their meetings by the end of August, mainly because of the complications regarding the situation of the Ottoman Armenians in case of a war with Russia and the enthusiasm demonstrated by the Russian Armenians for the Russian war effort. Considering the day-to-day changes in the policies of the CUP and the Entente, the party bodies of the Dashnaktsutyun were going to debate and finalize their strategy during September and October 1914.

THE EIGHTH WORLD CONGRESS OF THE DASHNAKTSUTYUN

During the eventful summer of 1914 the Dashnaks had delicate questions to address. The party, operating in the Ottoman, Russian, and Persian empires, had officially broken its alliance with the CUP in 1912. For the few years it had been investing in its organizations in eastern Anatolia in the form of "self-defense" and keeping in touch with other Armenian institutions and parties to help materialize Armenian reforms, which were chiefly sponsored by tsarist Russia along with other Western powers. In the Russian Empire the capabilities of the party had been severely hit by the government with a mass political trial between 1908 and 1912. While the Ottoman Armenians were the party's powerbase and priority, the general change in Russian policy toward Armenians from 1912 onward was a major factor, as relations between the party and the Russian government were on the mend.

Under these circumstances Dashnak delegates from all over the world were making their preparations to travel to Erzurum in the summer of 1914, a difficult feat even for those residing in Istanbul. In the meantime the reports about the details of the Dashnak congress kept coming to the Okhrana Bureau in Istanbul.³ Convened to define the general guidelines for party policies, world congresses of the party had witnessed debates on controversial subjects such as the use of terrorism, expropriations, and the party's stance toward socialism. This time the agenda of the congress mainly focused on the party's internal reorganization, its attitude toward a possible general war, and the Armenian reforms.

In late July, when the delegates sat down in Sanasarian College (the alma mater of some of them), these were the main questions. According to the agenda of the congress, it was planned to be held from July 25 to August 17. Due to the outbreak of the war, however, it had to be cut short

after two weeks.⁵ The congress began with the election of the chairs and the secretaries. Khachatur Malumian (Agnuni), Karekin Pastermajian (Armen Garo or Karo),⁶ Stepan Zorian (Rostom), and Arshak Vramian were elected as the chairs and Simon Vratsian, Arsen Ter Ioannisian, and Ruben Ohanjanian as the secretaries.⁷ Some of the other delegates attending the congress were Ruben Ter Minassian representing the Central Committee of Muş, Ruben Zartarian (the Azadamard newspaper), Hamazasp Srvantsdiants (Srvantsian) (Istanbul), Martiros Harutiunian (Eastern Bureau), Armenag Okhigian (Bitlis), Ardavazt Hanemian (Egypt), Avetis Injejikian (Beirut), and Mihran Terlemezian (Van).⁸

A wide range of organizations within the party from different countries were represented: three major bureaus (the Western Bureau, the Eastern Bureau, and the Armenia Bureau), the sections in the Ottoman, Russian, and Persian empires, Europe, and the United States, and the editorial boards of the party press organs and student bodies. Twenty-six delegates had deciding votes and four had consulting votes: a total of thirty delegates attending the twenty-eight sessions of the congress.⁹

One of the most under-researched aspects of the congress is its agenda and resolutions apart from the decisions regarding the Dashnak attitude toward the CUP and the war, which dominates the literature. Given the importance of the outbreak of the war, this is hardly surprising. But other items in the congress agenda reveal different dimensions of the party strategy in the face of various challenges. After the congressional bodies were elected, the activity reports of three bureaus for the last period were discussed. The report for the Armenia Bureau, the body responsible for "Turkish Armenia," outlined its efforts to organize Armenian national "self-defense," which was vexing the Ottoman military and administrative establishment. This had been carried out by means of "organization of armed battalions among Armenian inhabitants, provision of arms to them, and organization of mobile terrorist units." In addition, with the agreement of the Eastern Bureau, a member of the Armenia Bureau (Vramian) had been sent to the Russian Empire to collect donations and propagate the Armenian reforms and the Armenian Question in Russian high society.11

The efforts of the Western Bureau, which oversaw the European parts of the Ottoman Empire, Europe, the United States, Egypt, and the Balkans, were concentrated on propaganda for the Armenian cause in Europe. According to the activity report, the Western Bureau had not taken up any political activities or any terrorist acts since the Seventh World Congress. As a sign of reorganization, the Western Bureau was

abolished by the congress. Its areas of responsibility were transferred to the Armenia Bureau, which now had an Istanbul section.¹³

The participation of party members in national institutions was also a matter of debate. Assuming active roles in other Armenian institutions was considered harmful for the fortunes of the party because it required the exertion of party members. Moreover, the actions of party individuals within these institutions were reflected as the actions of the party. Hence the party members, particularly those within the party's administrative apparatus, were required not to be involved in national administrative bodies.¹⁴

A key subject that strained CUP-Dashnak relations was the Armenian reforms project. The agreement signed on February 8, 1914, was considered to be "unsatisfactory" by the congress. ¹⁵ The Dashnaks were not fully satisfied with the point reached by 1914, as their demands for decentralization and the boundaries of the regions covered by the upcoming inspectorates were not entirely met. However, they believed that the reform plan was a right step toward an enhancement of citizenship rights for the region's inhabitants. ¹⁶

The CUP was also unhappy about the reform project, for different reasons. Its grievances about the European interference in the affair and suspicions about Armenian independence or a Russian takeover of eastern Anatolia were aggravated by the losses in the Balkan Wars, which culminated in the loss of most European parts of the Ottoman Empire. When the Ottoman government bowed to the pressure and signed the agreement in February 1914, it did so very unwillingly.

The unwillingness of the CUP to facilitate the Armenian reforms was severely criticized by the delegates of the congress. The CUP was blamed for obstructing the realization of a reform program with "modest terms." Therefore the congress stipulated that the party would resist any negative measures taken by the government that would hinder the realization of the reform program and "defend the rights of the Armenian nation." ¹⁷

An interesting part of the congress deliberations concerned the relations of the Armenians with the Kurds. For the delegates at the congress the recent Kurdish disturbances in eastern Anatolia, such as the uprising in Bitlis, were thought to be advantageous for the Armenians because they demonstrated to the Ottoman government that "the Kurds were less reliable elements than the Armenians." Accordingly, they believed that this would compel the government to acknowledge the Armenians' right of self-defense. On these grounds they agreed to pursue a neutral policy vis-à-vis the Kurdish unrest. For instance, the party members could

render minor assistance to the Kurdish fugitive dissidents while asking the government to be armed for self-defense when necessary.¹⁸

In light of these problems the congress decided that the party irrevocably had to remain in opposition to the CUP and "fight against its nationalist, harmful, and antistate policies." Nevertheless, collaboration with the CUP in relatively important issues, which would conform to the Dashnak party program, was deemed possible. Party members were allowed to be in contact with the government circles through personal channels only for general issues.²⁰

The number of Armenian deputies in the Ottoman parliament, the CUP's rejection of the arming of Armenians by the treasury in the regions populated by the Kurds, the incompetence of the CUP regarding the boycott of Armenian commodities, and the restrictions on the unofficial Dashnak press organs in Istanbul and the provinces also contributed to the Dashnak discontent with the CUP policies. As a general principle it was decided not to join any collective action (such as mass meetings or electoral blocs) with the CUP. Only in extreme situations was the Armenia Bureau allowed to form alliances with the CUP for local purposes, such as the selection of local government officials. However, joint action and forming electoral blocs with the opposition parties in local and parliamentary elections were considered inevitable.

The congress's stand regarding the conditions of the Russian Armenians was inherently part of a bigger question of nationalities in the Russian Empire, dating back to the 1880s. Although some improvements had taken place, especially after the revolution of 1905, the Dashnaks still believed that the restrictions on Armenian schools and language needed to be eliminated. Moreover, the disproportionate representation of national minorities in the Duma, a legacy of an earlier arrangement in 1907 by Pyotr A. Stolypin, the Russian prime minister, was also criticized at the congress.²⁴

Another line of criticism about the Russian administration in the southern Caucasus concerned the chronic economic problems of the region. Having added a socialist coloring into the party agenda during the party's struggle against the tsarist regime from 1903 onward, which later paved the way for admission to the Second International, the party was concerned about the hardships of the Armenian peasants and laborers. The main solutions suggested by the congress were to allocate more land to the Armenian peasantry and to form more trade unions.²⁵

The course of action in the Persian Empire, where the Dashnaktsutyun had been a supporter of the constitutional movement, was also debated. It was decided that the party should cooperate with other leftist parties and democratic elements and continue its propaganda among the masses. The congress demanded the presence of three Armenian deputies in the Persian parliament.²⁶ To ensure the realization of these demands the congress allowed the formation of terrorist bands to be used against the government officials who were harming the party and the Armenians who served as informers for the Persian and Russian governments.²⁷

While these delegates were endlessly debating the Armenian reforms, the current condition of the party, and finances, the news about the outbreak of the war was dispatched to the congress by Pastermajian.²⁸ As the war loomed large, the delegates in Erzurum now had to decide on the strategy of the party regarding the military obligation of its members. This was a key question, especially if a Russo-Turkish war broke out, which many saw on the horizon during the hectic days of early August 1914. During the discussions some delegates entertained a pro-Russian viewpoint. One delegate even proposed the formation of Armenian volunteer bands under the Ottoman army against tsarist Russia.²⁹ But the majority of the congress supported neutrality.

As a general principle the congress decided that every member of the party should fulfill his military obligation as required by his country.³⁰ In fact this was a restatement of the resolution of the Seventh World Congress on a possible general war.³¹ Some of the side-demands for the Ottoman Armenians on this issue included the maintenance of a certain number of Armenian armed units provided by the government and the admission of Armenians into the gendarmerie in proportion to their population.³² The congress even adopted the use of propaganda among the Armenians to fulfill their military duties on the condition that they were stationed in their place of residence.³³

The sincerity of these congress resolutions on wartime obligations, which were made public after the congress, was viewed with skepticism by certain scholars. With varying tones of doubt, the Dashnak decision of neutrality was considered nothing short of a tactical lie, while their real plan was considered to be siding with the Russians. Some of these works argue that the congress, instead of supporting a principle of neutrality, ratified an alliance with the Russians and the strategy to be pursued in effect to help the Russian army in return for Armenian independence.³⁴

The main support for this claim is an Ottoman military intelligence report sent to the Baskumandanlik Vekaleti (the office of acting commander-in-chief), which was written after the Ottoman Empire entered the war.³⁵ The report explicitly states that the congress discussed

and ratified the Dashnak alliance with the Russians, which would grant the Armenians independence in return for Armenian support for the Russian war effort. According to this report, the Dashnaks would keep their obedience to the Ottoman authorities while arming themselves with the weaponry provided by the Russians until the Ottoman entry into the war. In case of war the Armenian soldiers in the Ottoman army would defect to the Russians. Depending on the success of the Ottoman army, the Armenians would either remain obedient or join the advancing Russian armies.³⁶

The report, written long after the Dashnak congress, does not provide further detail or any other written evidence about the comments in it (such as any correspondence between the congress and Dashnak Central Committees or the ratification of the deal struck with the Russians). Interestingly, Russian documentation of such an alliance before or during the congress has not been discussed in the literature. Therefore Russian and Armenian sources, along with the other Ottoman military correspondence from mid-September 1914, do not substantiate the assertion that the Dashnak congress in Erzurum ratified an alliance with the Russians.

More doubt concerning the validity of the Dashnak neutrality principle stems from the Dashnak attitude toward the formation of Armenian volunteer corps under the command of the Russian army.³⁷ It is true that from the outbreak of the war the high command of Russian administration in the Caucasus and influential political figures among the Russian Armenians, including certain Dashnaks, came into close contact for collaboration. Mainly through the Armenian National Bureau the idea of supporting the Russian war effort in the form of volunteers by the Russian Armenians was met with enthusiasm and established common ground during August 1914. The majority of the Dashnak organization under the Eastern Bureau was also going with the flow, which was effectively seen as proof that the congress resolutions were invalidated.³⁸

By the end of August 1914, however, the Ottoman Dashnaks were still meeting to discuss what needed to be done about the volunteer corps movement, given the complications it would create for the wartime loyalty of Armenians in the eyes of the CUP. There were conflicting views as to how to manage this, given the strong indications of the Ottoman entry to the war on the side of the Triple Alliance, particularly during the talks held in Erzurum and elsewhere. Not until mid-September did the representatives of the Armenia Bureau travel to inform the Dashnak leaders in Tbilisi about the upshot of their meetings. Moreover, the active

involvement of Ottoman Armenians in the volunteer corps movement en masse took place even later. Therefore by the time the World Congress and the negotiations with the CUP delegation ended the neutrality principle of the Dashnaks basically held. At that point a ratified alliance with the Russians on the agreement of all bodies does not seem to have existed.

THE COMMISSION OF NINE AND THE CUP OFFER

Soon after the news of Ottoman mobilization and the hostilities in Europe started, the congress was abruptly disbanded. Some prominent members of the party were assigned to decide on the remaining items of the congress agenda. This Commission of Nine would further discuss the specifics of the party strategy for the upcoming conflagration.³⁹ As they were reading and discussing the war, a team of CUP representatives approached them to talk about an offer. Zorian, Malumian, and Vramian made their preparations for the talks.⁴⁰

Two weeks into World War I rumors about the fate of the Ottoman Empire were endless. From Cercle d'Orient to ordinary coffeehouses, war talk was in the air. It was no different in Erzurum when the Dashnak Commission of Nine heard from the CUP delegation. When the two parties sat together, the CUP representatives revealed what they wanted to know: the Dashnak attitude in case of a Russo-Turkish war.

The CUP delegation consisted of Dr. Behaettin Şakir, the head of the Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa organization in the region, Naci Bey, the inspector for Persian and Caucasus operations, and Hilmi Bey, the inspector in the Erzurum region. These figures arrived in Erzurum mainly to organize the Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa network in eastern Anatolia but also carried out the negotiation process for the CUP. Along with the CUP emissaries, various Muslim delegates from Persia and the Caucasus, who were perhaps brought to convince the Dashnaks to collaborate, also arrived in Erzurum.

As it turns out, the proposal of the CUP delegation to the Dashnak representatives has been a matter of contention, like the specifics of the congress. Following Uras's work, various Turkish scholars, to varying degrees, were very skeptical about the existence of such an offer.⁴³ Uras claimed that the arrival of the CUP delegates in Erzurum and their offer to the Dashnaks of cooperation against the Russians were not corroborated by any other evidence except for Dashnak accounts.⁴⁴

However, the existence of the CUP offer is substantiated by various documents from Armenian, Ottoman, and Russian correspondence and

memoirs. The memoirs and other accounts of Dashnak delegates, some of whom remained in Erzurum after the congress, attest that the Dashnak-CUP meeting took place and give some details about the CUP offer of collaboration. ⁴⁵ On the Ottoman side, the correspondence between Behaettin Şakir and the CUP general secretary Mithat Şükrü about the outcome of their talks with the Dashnaks in late August 1914 leaves no room for speculation about the existence of the proposal. Moreover, Russian official correspondence corroborates those sources. ⁴⁶

When the two parties sat together, the initial subject was the attitude of the Dashnaks in case of a Russian attack. The Dashnaks, stating their strict neutrality principle, assured the CUP delegation that each of their members would perform their civic duties, which meant that in the event of a Russian attack the Ottoman government could count on the services of Dashnaks with Ottoman citizenship.⁴⁷ Behaettin Şakir, not satisfied with the answer, reported that the Dashnaks "half-heartedly said that they would join them [the Ottoman forces] in the defense in case of an attack by the Russians."

Hearing the restatement of the congress resolution about the war, the CUP delegation revealed another possible scheme in the next meeting. They centered their argument on the superiority of the Central Powers vis-à-vis the Entente and the Ottoman influence on the Muslim world. According to the CUP representatives, in addition to German military might, the Ottoman religious influence on the Muslim subjects of the Entente Powers, particularly those of the Russian Empire, would tip the scale in favor of the Central Powers. Moreover, they said that they had already secured the allegiances of various Muslim peoples and Georgians in the Caucasus and Persia against the Russians.⁴⁹

At this point the CUP delegation stated that the assistance of the Dashnaks was going to be crucial for such an undertaking to succeed, given their hold in the Ottoman, Russian, and Persian empires. This scenario would entail active Dashnak support against the Russian Empire. Joining their forces with the Muslims of the Caucasus and the Georgians, the Russian Armenians were to incite rebellion in the Caucasus, while the Ottoman Armenians would join the advancing Ottoman forces. According to the CUP delegation, this joint anti-Russian rebellion would be strong enough to push the Russian forces into the area beyond the Caucasus range. ⁵¹

In return the Armenians would get an autonomous Armenia under Ottoman suzerainty. This autonomous unit would consist of Erevan (Yerevan) guberniia (province), the western part of Elizavetopol guberniia, Kars oblast (region), and bordering parts of Erzurum, Van, and Bitlis

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vilayets (provinces). The other parties helping the Ottoman cause (Georgians and Muslims of the Caucasus) would also get their autonomous administrative bodies. ⁵² The negotiations about autonomy, which after all had been the chief motive for the Armenian revolutionary parties, were not taken up by the Dashnaks as enthusiastically as the CUP delegation imagined. ⁵³

THE DASHNAK REJECTION OF THE CUP PROPOSAL

The Dashnak delegates found themselves in a conundrum. Initially they wanted to stall the offer by telling the CUP delegation that they could not accept such an offer and that they needed to consult other sections of the party. This attitude was noted by Behaettin Şakir, who wrote about the assurances and deeds that the Dashnaks demanded from the government to consider their proposal. Although it later became clear that the Dashnaks would not accept the CUP offer, the CUP emissaries insisted on hearing their final decision.

As their final answer to this daring proposal the Dashnaks, believing that the war was going to be a disaster for the fate of Ottoman Empire, restated their position of neutrality and rejected the proposal. ⁵⁶ Instead of entering the war against Russia, they advised the government to keep the Ottoman Empire out of the war. ⁵⁷ The Dashnak delegation took pains to assure the CUP representatives of the loyalty of the Ottoman Armenians if war became a reality. Nevertheless, Vramian believed that these assurances failed to convince the CUP delegation, who saw the Dashnaks as "Russian sympathizers." ⁵⁸ The impression the Dashnaks got after the negotiations was that the Ottoman Empire sooner or later was going to wage war against the Russians despite their advice. ⁵⁹

Was there any realistic chance for a positive answer to this proposal? Factoring in all the variables, it was very unlikely for the Dashnaks to say yes. Since 1912 relations between the CUP and the Dashnaks had been far from those of allies. The Dashnaks had various grievances over the land reform in eastern Anatolia, their relations with the Kurds, and the CUP attitude toward Armenian autonomy. More recently the CUP's unwillingness to implement the Armenian reform project, which was mainly sponsored by the Entente powers, had become the main source of Dashnak discontent.

At that point the proposal to fight against the Entente, to which many Armenians had belonged as citizens and for whose cause they had sympathy, put them in a very complicated position. Although the Dashnaks sensed that the refusal could be interpreted as lack of dedication to the Ottoman cause and could complicate the situation of the Ottoman Armenians, the restatement of the congress resolution about the war was the only realistic option by the end of August.

In particular it was infeasible for the Dashnaks to convince their compatriots in the Russian Empire to go against the Entente. Since 1912 the Russians had been the main patrons behind the Armenian reform process. Moreover, owing to a change in their priorities in the southern Caucasus, mainly due to the fear of a possible pan-Islamic movement, their relations with the Russian Armenians were more cordial. The Dashnaktsutyun, which suffered from a major crackdown during Stolypin's tenure and faced a lengthy trial, saw the Russians soften their attitude in 1912. But by that time the party had lost much of its power base in the Russian Empire. The Armenian bourgeoisie of Tbilisi and Baku as well as the Armenian Church took hold of Armenian political affairs in the southern Caucasus. It was practically impossible for the Dashnaktsutyun to turn pro-Russian public opinion among the Russian Armenians into a plan proposing a major rebellion against tsarist Russia under the patronage of the Ottoman Empire. To sum up, the Dashnaks simply lacked the motivation and capability to convince their own organization and the Armenian masses in the Caucasus to turn against tsarist Russia.

From the perspective of the CUP the offer was an effective political reconnaissance mission to find out about the attitude of the strongest Armenian political party in case of a war with Russia. The CUP already knew about the Dashnak discontent over the issues raised at the congress, but it wanted to know as much as possible about the Dashnak standpoint and see what could be obtained from the Dashnaks. The situation of the Ottoman Armenians, inhabiting the border areas with Russia, was of great importance.

For some scholars, however, the CUP offer was no more than a formality to disguise its true plan, which was to liquidate the Dashnak members attending the congress. This view, espoused by Dadrian and Akçam, emphasizes the roles of the CUP representatives within the Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa network in the area and downplays the importance of the meetings with the Dashnaks, which were supposed to fail in any case. ⁶¹

The main support for this view is a letter to Behaettin Şakir from Hilmi Bey, which was mentioned in the memoirs of a former Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa member, Arif Cemil (Denker), who comments on the letter.⁶² The letter itself makes no mention of liquidating the Dashnak delegates, but Arif Cemil does. Apart from the questions about its authenticity, the

letter offers no details as to how to deal with these Dashnak delegates and who they were.

More importantly, this argument is based on the presumption that the members of the Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa had come to Erzurum to eliminate the Dashnak leadership without offering further evidence. It singles out the interpretation of Arif Cemil while ignoring all other evidence in the related period that points out the CUP effort toward the attainment of whatever Armenian support it could obtain and stability in the region. It seems that by the end of August both the CUP and the Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa were wary of any unrest among the Armenians in such a momentous period, as their internal correspondence demonstrates. Accordingly, the CUP delegation, on the orders of the CUP Central Committee, carried out the negotiation process as a means to find out what could be obtained from the Dashnaks in case of a war.

CONCLUSION

In the first weeks of August 1914 the delegates of the Dashnak congress were deciding on what to do about the twenty-fifth anniversary of the party, which was due the following year. For the celebrations the congress decided to publish the albums of party heroes and memoirs of experienced party members and collect money for statues of well-known figures. The Ninth World Congress was to convene in 1915 unless there was an extraordinary situation.⁶⁵

The congressional debates on the situation of the Armenian reforms, land problems, reorganization within the party, and finances were overshadowed by the outbreak of the war. The congress decided on the neutrality principle and hastily adjourned. When the CUP representatives approached the Dashnak delegation shortly afterward, a grand undertaking was on the table, which included a joint move against the Russian Empire. The Dashnak delegation, however, considering the condition of the party and of Armenians in the Ottoman and Russian empires, rejected the CUP offer and repeated their position of neutrality.

By the end of August 1914 the leaders of the Dashnaktsutyun had more reasons to believe that the Ottoman Empire was going to join the war on the side of the Central Powers. For members of the CUP the news from the Caucasus regarding the Armenian support for the volunteer movement was adding uncertainty about the Dashnak strategy, which revealed nothing new during their negotiations in Erzurum. Nevertheless, at that point they were cautious not to alienate the strongest Armenian

political party and the Ottoman Armenians in general, who would be a key factor in a war with tsarist Russia.

Although both sides were suspicious of each other, they continued to look for options in this chaotic situation. The Dashnaks were still negotiating with the CUP through personal channels and discussing possible options among themselves. By the end of August 1914 discussions were still being held by the Armenia Bureau/Istanbul section as to what should be done about the volunteer corps and the war stance, without reaching final decisions. Nonetheless, the Russian Armenians, including the Dashnak organizations in Tbilisi and Yerevan were already demonstrating their support for the volunteer movement under the aegis of tsarist Russia.

When the World Congress and the negotiations with the CUP representatives ended, the Dashnak road to war was still rather murky, given the uncertainties surrounding the situation of the Ottoman Empire. From September to November 1914 the CUP still held informal meetings with prominent Dashnaks, while military intelligence about Ottoman Armenians joining the Armenian volunteer corps kept coming at an increased rate. In this period the Dashnak leaders, seeing the situation in the southern Caucasus and the Ottoman Empire, explored all possible strategies, which included approaching the Entente. As a political party they were adjusting to the new conditions caused by the Great War. Like the CUP, they were one of the players in this huge gambling party.

NOTES

- L. C. Westenenk, "Diary Concerning the Armenian Mission," Armenian Review 39, no. 1 (Spring 1986): 79–81. For the sake of convenience, all dates in the chapter are converted to the Gregorian calendar.
- 2. Various details about the congress such as its date, agenda, and resolutions have been items of debate, mostly revolving around the decisions regarding the wartime obligations of the Armenians. Richard G. Hovannisian, Armenia on the Road to Independence, 1918; Raymond Kevorkian, The Armenian Genocide; Dikran M. Kaligian, Armenian Organization and Ideology under Ottoman Rule; Hratch Dasnabedian, History of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation: Dashnaktsutiun, 1890–1924 (Milan: OEMME Edizioni, 1989); Stanford J. Shaw, The Ottoman Empire in World War I, vol. 1; Manoug J. Somakian, Empires in Conflict; Sean McMeekin, The Russian Origins of the First World War; Michael A. Reynolds, Shattering Empires; Salahi R. Sonyel, The Ottoman Armenians; Esat Uras, The Armenians in History and the Armenian Question; Justin McCarthy, Esat Arslan, Cemalettin Taşkıran, and Ömer Turan, The Armenian Rebellion at Van; Guenter Lewy, The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey; Kemal Çiçek, Ermenilerin Zorunlu Göçü,

1915-1917; M. Hakan Yavuz, "Contours of Scholarship on Armenian-Turkish Relations"; Kamuran Gürün, *The Armenian File* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1985); Erdal İlter, Türkiye'de Sosyalist Ermenilerin Silahlanma Faaliyetleri ve Milli Mücadele'de Ermeniler (Ankara: Turhan Kitabevi, 2005); Muammer Demirel, Birinci Dünya Harbinde Erzurum ve Çevresinde Ermeni Hareketleri (1914–1918) (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1996). The interpretations offered for the meetings with the CUP delegation have been even more conflicting: Taner Akçam, From Empire to Republic; idem, A Shameful Act; Vahakn N. Dadrian, German Responsibility in the Armenian Genocide; Donald Bloxham, The Great Game of Genocide; Hilmar Kaiser, "Regional Resistance to Central Government Policies." Accounts by prominent Dashnaks reveal key details about the congress and the meetings, albeit from a Dashnak point of view: Vahan Minakhorian, 1915 Tvakane (I relied on the translation by Garabet K. Moumdjian, accessible at http://arf decision1914.blogspot.co.uk); Ruben Ter Minassian's statements are included in Arnold J. Toynbee, *The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire*, 1915–16; Vahan Papazian, "Hamashkharhayin Baderazmuh yev Daroni Ashkharhuh" (I relied on the translation by Garabet K. Moumdjian, accessible at http://arfdecision 1914.blogspot.co.uk); Garegin Pasdermadjian (Armen Garo), Armenia: A Leading Factor in the Winning of the War (New York: American Council for Armenia, 1919); idem, Bank Ottoman: Memoirs of Armen Garo (Detroit: A. Topouzian, 1990); Simon Vratsian, Armenia and the Armenian Question (Boston: Hayrenik Publishing Company, 1943). The correspondence between the CUP delegation in Erzurum and CUP Central Committee and various military intelligence reports about the resolutions of the congress are critical to understand the perception of Ottoman officials about the attitude of the Dashnaks. These materials, some of which were published, are found in Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi/Prime Ministry Ottoman Archive in Istanbul (hereafter BOA) and Askeri Tarih ve Stratejik Etüt Başkanlığı/Turkish General Staff Military History Archives, Ankara (hereafter ATASE). See Askeri Tarih Belgeleri Dergisi (ATBD) 31, no. 81 and 32, no. 83 (1982-83); Arşiv Belgeleriyle Ermeni Faaliyetleri, 1914–1918, vol. 1. The Russian interest in the subject, mainly through their secret political service, military agents, and diplomatic corps stationed in the Ottoman Empire, provides an alternative perspective. Relevant materials are held in Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii/ State Archive of the Russian Federation, Moscow (hereafter GARF), Rossiisskii Gosudarstvennyi Voenno-Istoricheskii Arkhiv/Russian State Military History Archive, Moscow (hereafter RGVIA), and Arkhiv Vneshnei Politiki Rossiiskoi Imperii/Archives of Foreign Policy of Russian Empire (hereafter AVPRI).

- 3. GARF, to the Head of Secret Service in Turkey, 14.5.1914 [May 27, 1914], f. 529, o. 1, d. 12, l. 26.
- 4. The controversy around the congress begins with its date, which ranges from June to December 1914. The paucity of primary sources on the subject and the vague dates used in the available sources may have contributed to the confusion about the exact dates. For example, in the extract from the congress resolutions that the Okhrana obtained, the date for the congress is given as "July 1914," without the exact dates. GARF, extract from the resolutions of the eighth general congress of the Dashnaktsutyun, which convened in July 1914, f. 102, Osobyi otdel (OO) (1914),

o. 244, d. 14 (obshch.), ll. 251-252. Even Kaligian, whose work relies on primary documents from the archives of the Dashnaktsutyun, changed the date of the congress from August 1914 to July 1914 in the second edition of his book (Kaligian, Armenian Organization and Ideology, 219). Most accounts date the congress somewhere between mid-July and mid-August: Vahakn N. Dadrian, "The Secret Young-Turk Ittihadist Conference and the Decision for the World War I Genocide of the Armenians," 184; Simon Payaslian, The History of Armenia from the Origins to the Present (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 127; Arsen Avagyan, "İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti ile Ermeni Siyasi Partileri Arasındaki İlişkiler," in Ermeniler ve İttihat ve Terakki: İşbirliğinden Çatışmaya, ed. Rober Koptaş (İstanbul: Aras, 2005), 131; Zarevand (Zaven and Nartouhie Nalbandian), United and Independent Turania: Aims and Designs of the Turks (Leiden: Brill, 1971), 86; Demirel, Birinci Dünya Harbinde Erzurum ve Çevresinde Ermeni Hareketleri, 20; Lewy, The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey, 100; Dasnabedian, History of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, 106-7. The claim that the congress convened in June was first asserted by Uras and followed by others: Uras, The Armenians in History, 841; Shaw, The Ottoman Empire in World War I, 1:93; Yusuf Hikmet Bayur, Türk İnkılabı Tarihi, vol. 3, part 3 :11; Erdal Aydoğan, İttihat ve Terakki'nin Doğu Politikası (1908–1918) (Istanbul: Ötüken, 2005), 288; Antranig Chalabian, Antranik Paşa (Istanbul: Peri, 2003), 162; McCarthy et al., The Armenian Rebellion at Van, 182; and Sonyel, The Ottoman Armenians, 285. Yusuf Halaçoğlu uses December 1914 for the date of the congress, which is simply erroneous: Yusuf Halaçoğlu, The Story of 1915, 23-24.

- 5. GARF, Agenda of the Eighth Congress of the Dashnaktsutyun Party, which took place in Erzurum (Turkish Armenia) from July 25 to August 17 (new style), f. 102, OO (1914), o. 244, d. 14, l. 176; GARF, extract from the Resolutions of the Eighth General Congress of Dashnaktsutyun, which convened in July 1914, f. 102, OO (1914), o. 244, d. 14, l. 252. Excerpts from the congress resolutions were partly published in Mehmet Kanar, ed., Ermeni Komitelerinin Emelleri ve İhtilal Hareketleri: Meşrutiyetten Önce ve Sonra (Istanbul: Der, 2001), 198–203. This is a modern Turkish version of Ermeni Komitelerinin Amal ve Harekat-i İhtilaliyyesi: İlan-ı Meşrutiyet'den Evvel ve Sonra (Istanbul: Matbaa-i Amire, 1916, aka the Turkish White Book).
- Although he was selected as one of the chairs of the congress, Pastermajian could not attend and had to stay in Istanbul due to the outbreak of the war. Garo, Bank Ottoman, 17.
- 7. GARF, f. 102, OO (1914), o. 244, d. 14, ll. 176–78.
- 8. Dasnabedian, History of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, 107.
- 9. GARF, f. 102, OO (1914), o. 244, d. 14, ll. 252-52 ob.
- 10. GARF, f. 102, OO (1914), o. 244, d. 14, l. 179.
- 11. GARF, f. 102, OO (1914), o. 244, d. 14, l. 179 ob.
- 12. GARF, f. 102, OO (1914), o. 244, d. 14, ll. 178-79.
- 13. GARF, f. 102, OO (1914), o. 244, d. 14, l. 259 ob.
- 14. GARF, f. 102, OO (1914), o. 244, d. 14, ll. 254–54 ob.
- 15. GARF, f. 102, OO (1914), o. 244, d. 14, l. 253.
- 16. GARF, f. 102, OO (1914), o. 244, d. 14, ll. 184-85, l. 253.

- 17. GARF, f. 102, OO (1914), o. 244, d. 14, l. 253 ob.
- 18. GARF, f. 102, OO (1914), o. 244, d. 14, ll. 183–83 ob.
- 19. GARF, f. 102, OO (1914), o. 244, d. 14, ll. 252 ob, 253.
- 20. GARF, f. 102, OO (1914), o. 244, d. 14, l. 253.
- 21. GARF, f. 102, OO (1914), o. 244, d. 14, l. 182.
- 22. GARF, f. 102, OO (1914), o. 244, d. 14, ll. 182–82 ob.
- 23. GARF, f. 102, OO (1914), o. 244, d. 14, ll. 183 ob-184.
- 24. GARF, f. 102, OO (1914), o. 244, d. 14, ll. 257–57 ob; GARF, f. 102, OO (1914), o. 244, d. 14, l. 190.
- 25. GARF, f. 102, OO (1914), o. 244, d. 14, l. 257 ob.
- 26. GARF, f. 102, OO (1914), o. 244, d. 14, l. 258.
- 27. GARF, f. 102, OO (1914), o. 244, d. 14, l. 193 ob.
- 28. Garo, Bank Ottoman, 17.
- 29. Richard G. Hovannisian, "Simon Vratzian and Armenian Nationalism," *Middle Eastern Studies* 5, no. 3 (October 1969): 202; Dasnabedian, *History of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation*, 107; Minakhorian, 1915 Tvakane, 69.
- 30. GARF, f. 102, o. 244, OO (1914), d. 14, l. 253 ob; Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 175; Dasnabedian, *History of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation*, 107; Kaligian, *Armenian Organization and Ideology*, 221.
- 31. Dasnabedian, History of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, 107; Politicheskie Partii Rossii Konets XIX–Pervaia Tret' XX Veka: Entsiklopediia (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 1996), 178.
- 32. GARF, f. 102, OO (1914), o. 244, d. 14, l. 254.
- 33. GARF, f. 102, OO (1914), o. 244, d. 14, l. 187.
- 34. McCarthy et al., *The Armenian Rebellion at Van*, 182; İlter, *Türkiye'de Sosyalist Ermenilerin Silahlanma Faaliyetleri*, 53–54; Halaçoğlu, *The Story of 1915*, 23–24; Ergünöz Akçora, "Ermeni Sorunu ve Türklere Yaptıkları Katliamlarda Ermeni Komitelerinin Yeri," *Yeni Türkiye Ermeni Sorunu Özel Sayısı II* 38 (March–April 2001): 760.
- 35. *ATBD* 32, no. 83 (March 1983): 61–73, doc. no. 1903; *Arşiv Belgeleriyle Ermeni Faaliyetleri*, 1:97–108.
- 36. The intelligence regarding this strategy appears in various Ottoman military intelligence reports starting from mid-September 1914. In relation to this strategy these reports comment on "the decisions of the Armenian intelligentsia" and the Russian persuasion of the Armenians to join an alliance, but they do not mention the congress in Erzurum or the ratification of the Russian-Armenian alliance in this congress, as the report in note 35 suggests. These reports suggest that by the second half of September 1914 the Ottoman military establishment in eastern Anatolia had strong suspicions about the allegiance of Ottoman Armenians in case of a war. *ATBD* 31, no. 81 (December 1982): 3–5, doc. no. 1804; *ATBD* 32, no. 83 (March 1983): 3, doc. no. 1893; *ATBD* 32, no. 83 (March 1983): 7–8, doc. no. 1894.
- 37. McMeekin, *The Russian Origins of the First World War*, 153–58; Hovhannes Katchaznouni, *The Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnagtzoutiun) Has Nothing to Do Anymore* (New York: Armenian Information Service, 1955), 5.
- 38. The positive attitude among the Russian Armenians toward the Russian war effort was noted both by the Ottoman Dashnaks and by the Armenian patriarch. Garo,

- Bank Ottoman, 16–18; Papazian, "Hamashkharhayin Baderazmuh yev Daroni Ashkharhuh," 3–9; Zaven Der Yeghiayan, My Patriarchal Memoirs, 33.
- 39. Kaligian, Armenian Organization and Ideology, 220; Kevorkian, The Armenian Genocide, 175; Minakhorian, 1915 Tvakane, 69; Hovannisian, Armenia on the Road to Independence, 41. Along with the members of the delegation that would meet the CUP delegation (Malumian, Zorian, and Vramian), Ruben Ter Minassian and Vratsian were likely to be the members of this Commission of Nine because they were delegates in the world congress and remained in Erzurum during the talks with the CUP delegation.
- 40. BOA, Dahiliye Nezareti (DH) Şifre Kalemi (ŞFR) 438/123, Cemal (deputy governor of Erzurum) to the Ministry of Interior, 15 Ağustos 1330 [August 28, 1914]; Minakhorian, 1915 Tvakane, 70–71; Pasdermadjian, Armenia, 2–3; Dasnabedian, History of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, 108.
- 41. Events in Sasun and Muş, 11.11.1915 [November 24, 1915] in M. G. Nersisian, ed., Genotsid Armian v Osmanskoi Imperii: Sbornik Dokumentov i Materialov (Yerevan: Aiastan, 1982), doc. no. 177, 332–33; Pasdermadjian, Armenia, 2; Kevorkian, The Armenian Genocide, 175; Hovannisian, Armenia on the Road to Independence, 41. Some sources omit Filibeli Hilmi Bey. Dasnabedian, History of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, 108, Papazian, "Hamashkharhayin Baderazmuh yev Daroni Ashkharhuh," 3–9.
- 42. Nersisian, Genotsid Armian v Osmanskoi Imperii, 332–33.
- 43. For some scholars who offer Uras's explanation, see Sonyel, *The Ottoman Armenians*, 285; İlter, *Türkiye'de Sosyalist Ermenilerin Silahlanma Faaliyetleri*, 54–61; Yusuf İzzettin Uçar, "Taşnak Komitesi'nin Kuruluşu ve Faaliyetleri (1890–1922)" (MA thesis, Hacettepe University, 1994), 120. McCarthy et al., mainly relying on Uras, state that "there is no real evidence for the [CUP proposal] assertion, which is based on Armenian sources" but add that "it is not impossible": McCarthy et al., *The Armenian Rebellion at Van*, 182. Similarly, Gürün mainly follows Uras's line of reasoning on the existence of the offer and points out that "it seems impossible to establish what they [the Ottoman commission] suggested, if they did take part": Gürün, *The Armenian File*, 188–89.
- 44. Uras, The Armenians in History, 842.
- 45. Ruben Ter Minassian, who was one of the participants in the congress and remained in Erzurum during the talks, confirms the CUP offer. His recollections about the offer first appeared in the Russian press after he addressed the Armenians in Moscow in February 1916. They were published in *Journal de Lausanne* on February 13, 1916, and then in Toynbee, *The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire*, 80–82. Because of its availability in multiple European sources as well as the dearth of other sources on the Dashnak-CUP negotiations, this statement by Ter Minassian has been widely used in the literature. Another mention of the offer is found in his report to the Russian Foreign Ministry dated November 24, 1915, about the events in Sasun and Muş (doc. no. 177 in Nersisian, *Genotsid Armian v Osmanskoi Imperii*, 332–35). Somakian, for example, citing the original archive file at AVPRI, uses Ter Minassian's narrative for delineating the nature of the proposal: Somakian, *Empires in Conflict*, 73. Other Dashnak accounts tell about various aspects of the negotiation process. Vratsian, *Armenia and the*

- Armenian Question, 25; Minakhorian, 1915 Tvakane, 64–71; Pasdermadjian, Armenia, 2; Papazian, "Hamashkharhayin Baderazmuh yev Daroni Ashkharhuh," 3–9.
- 46. The Russian ambassador, Mikhail N. Girs (Michael De Giers), was also informed about the offer of the CUP delegation to the Dashnaks. RGVIA, secret telegram from the ambassador in Constantinople, 7.10.1914 [October 20, 1914], f. 2000, o. 1, d. 3860, l. 75.
- 47. Kaligian, Armenian Organization and Ideology, 220–21; Nersisian, Genotsid Armian v Osmanskoi Imperii, 333; Minakhorian, 1915 Tvakane, 70–71; Vratsian, Armenia and the Armenian Question, 25n>26; M. Philips Price, War and Revolution in Asiatic Russia (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1917), 243–44.
- 48. BOA, DH.ŞFR 438/123.
- 49. Nersisian, Genotsid Armian v Osmanskoi Imperii, 333–34.
- Ibid.; Kaligian, Armenian Organization and Ideology, 221–22; Vratsian, Armenia and the Armenian Question, 25-26; Papazian, "Hamashkharhayin Baderazmuh yev Daroni Ashkharhuh," 3–9.
- 51. Nersisian, Genotsid Armian v Osmanskoi Imperii, 333-34.
- Ibid.
- 53. BOA, DH.ŞFR 438/123; Kaiser, 211. Behaettin Şakir reported his impressions of the negotiations: "the establishment of Ottoman hold in the Caucasus, even Caucasian autonomy, made them [the Dashnak delegation] despair." BOA, DH.ŞFR 438/123.
- 54. Kaligian, Armenian Organization and Ideology, 222.
- 55. BOA, DH.ŞFR 438/123.
- RGVIA, f. 2000, o. 1, d. 3860, l. 75; Nersisian, Genotsid Armian v Osmanskoi Imperii, 333.
- 57. BOA, DH.ŞFR 438/123; Kaiser, 211; Nersisian, Genotsid Armian v Osmanskoi Imperii, 333; Vratsian, Armenia and the Armenian Question, 25–26; Kaligian, Armenian Organization and Ideology, 222.
- 58. Kaligian, Armenian Organization and Ideology, 222. In late August 1914, in a letter to the ARF Constantinople Responsible Body, Zorian depicted a similar picture and wrote that in the Ottoman administration "there is doubt and mistrust toward our organization [the Dashnaktsutyun]": cited in Moumdjian, chapter 27 in this volume.
- 59. Kaligian, *Armenian Organization and Ideology*, 222–23; Papazian, "Hamashkharhayin Baderazmuh yev Daroni Ashkharhuh," 3–9. Vratsian had the same impression about the negotiations. See Moumdjian, chapter 27 in this volume.
- 60. Reynolds, Shattered Empires, 117; Zarevand, United and Independent Turania, 87–88.
- 61. Akçam, A Shameful Act, 143–44; Akçam, From Empire to Republic, 160–64, Dadrian, German Responsibility in the Armenian Genocide, 47; Dadrian, "The Secret Young-Turk Ittihadist Conference," 184. The interpretations vary slightly. Kevorkian thinks that the offer was made to be rejected so that the CUP could accuse the Armenians of treachery: Kevorkian, The Armenian Genocide, 175. Bloxham believes that the negative answer of the Dashnak delegation prompted Bahaeddin Şakir to give the orders of liquidation: Donald Bloxham, The Great Game of Genocide, 72; idem, "The Armenian Genocide of 1915–1916," 158.

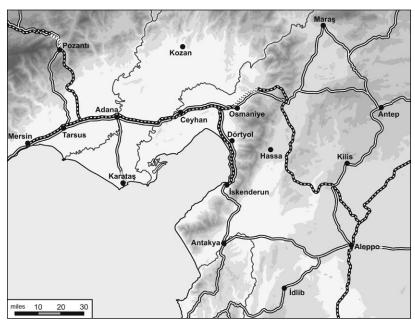
- 62. A. Mil, "Umumi Harpte Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa," *Vakit* 13, 15 İkinciteşrin 1933 [November 15, 1933], 5; "Umumi Harpte Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa" *Vakit* 14, 16 İkinciteşrin 1933 [November 16, 1933], 5. Hilmi Bey's reproduced letter reads: "The necessary preparations have been made for the individuals on whose departure from Erzurum you informed us in a coded telegram.... I have given necessary instructions to seize them at any cost." Arif Cemil's memoirs first appeared in 1933–34 in a daily newspaper, *Vakit*, under his nom de plume, A. Mil. They were later published as a book. Arif Cemil, *Birinci Dünya Savaşında Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa* (Istanbul: Arba Yayınları, 1997).
- 63. For instance, in his answer to Behaettin Şakir's telegram (BOA, DH.ŞFR 438/123), the CUP general secretary, Mithat Şükrü, stressed the importance for the CUP of the prosperity and happiness of the Armenian citizens of the Ottoman Empire. Taner Akçam and Vahakn N. Dadrian, *Tehcir ve Taktil: Divan-1 Harb-i Örft Zabıtları, İttihad ve Terakki'nin Yargılanması, 1919–1922* (Istanbul: Bilgi Üniversitesi, 2008), 364–65. Even after the rejection of the CUP proposal, Süleyman Askeri, the head of Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa, reminded his men that it was essential to maintain the neutrality of the Armenians. Vahdet Keleşyılmaz, "I. Dünya Savaşı Başlarında Kafkasya ve Çevresine İlişkin Stratejik Yaklaşım ve Faaliyetler," in *Türkler*, ed. Hasan Celal Güzel, Kemal Çiçek, and Salim Koca (Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, 2002), 13:395.
- 64. In addition to the correspondence about the outcome of the negotiations, Mithat Şükrü's statements show that the offer was made on the orders of the CUP Central Committee. Akçam and Dadrian, *Tehcir ve Taktil*, 364–65.
- 65. GARF, f. 102, OO (1914), o. 244, d. 14, ll. 256 ob, 261 ob.

A Missed Opportunity in World War I

Justin McCarthy

Cilicia, roughly the region from Adana to İskenderun (Alexandretta) and their hinterlands, was at the center of Ottoman communications with Syria and Iraq during World War I. Any map will indicate the wartime potential of an attack in Cilicia, potentially cutting Ottoman supplies to the armies fighting in the south. At the same time when the British government was contemplating an attack on the Gallipoli Peninsula, more reasonable voices were advocating Cilicia as a better site for invasion.

Lord Herbert Kitchener, the secretary of state for war, suggested an invasion at Iskenderun at a cabinet meeting early in the war, on January 8, 1915: "Lord Kitchener suggested an attack on Alexandretta as a minor but useful operation requiring from 30,000 to 50,000 men. It would strike an effective blow at the Turkish communications with Syria." The high commissioner in Egypt also advocated such an attack, as did military intelligence in Cairo. The cabinet ordered study by the War Office and the Admiralty. Military intelligence believed that the invasion would cut the Baghdad and Syrian railroads, seriously hampering the Ottoman supply line to Palestine, the Egyptian border, and Iraq. İskenderun in British hands, they believed, would give the British navy a base from which it could control the coast all the way to Suez. The Admiralty recommended the invasion. Kitchener's plan was limited in scope. It did not realize the full possibilities of a Cilician attack in disrupting Ottoman defenses. Nevertheless, he understood the potential benefits of such an attack. He was to continue advocating it in the coming months. (It should be noted that, while the British routinely spoke of a possible attack at İskenderun, they actually considered two landing places. One was near İskenderun



MAP 29.1. Cilicia.

itself, although military intelligence did not feel that this afforded good landing places. The other was in the Gulf of İskenderun, which would have been a more reasonable point of attack, as described below.)²

Kitchener repeated his advocacy of an İskenderun attack at the cabinet meeting of January 13. "He said a very good scheme had been worked out." Others agreed at the time: "Mr. Churchill said there were no difficulties from a naval point of view." At the same meeting, however, the cabinet ordered the Admiralty to prepare a naval attack on the Gallipoli Peninsula. That decision was to end any real possibility of an attack in Cilicia. The cabinet gave scant consideration to Cilicia, ultimately rejecting any attack there. 4

It is somewhat surprising that the British seem to have been more concerned with the postwar future than with Cilicia as a wartime objective. A main argument advanced for seizing the İskenderun region was the benefit of holding it after the war. The first argument was strategic. Iskenderun was described as a key to projecting naval power in the eastern Mediterranean. While the French were wartime allies of the British, they were considered to be potential rivals who might have to be faced militarily someday. The British assumed that the French would take possession of Syria, from which they might attack south to Palestine and

Egypt. A military force in İskenderun, threatening Syria's northern border by land and sea, would keep the French from attacking south.

More important and given more consideration in detailed reports by Lord Kitchener and the Admiralty was the position of the British in Iraq. Despite the French desire for a place in Iraq, it was assumed that it would be British after the war. British planners felt that holding İskenderun was essential, or at least very important, to the British military and economic position in Iraq.⁶ The British would take and hold İskenderun and its hinterlands. A railroad would connect İskenderun to Iraq.⁷ This would allow future exports ready access to the Mediterranean.

The plan stated that holding İskenderun would also aid in the defense of Iraq from a future enemy, assumed to be Russia. Troops could be brought to Iraq one week sooner through İskenderun and then by rail than would otherwise be possible. A British troop concentration in İskenderun would also enable British forces to attack the Russian flank as it moved south.⁸

Once the purely naval campaign had failed and soldiers were committed at Gallipoli, the only somewhat serious plan advanced for an attack at Cilicia was as a diversion that would draw Turkish forces from the Dardanelles. As such, the plan was rightly rejected by the cabinet. Faced with possible loss of their capital, the Ottomans would never have sent troops from the Dardanelles to Cilicia. They might have been forced to draw troops from the Palestine and Iraq theaters, and this would have had a serious effect on the war. No one in Britain, however, considered this a serious objective. The main objection was that a Cilician campaign would draw troops from Gallipoli. Nothing was to be allowed to detract from that forlorn effort.

Kitchener never completely abandoned thoughts of a Cilician campaign. By November of 1915 the cabinet had decided to abandon Gallipoli. Kitchener suggested that an attack in Cilicia would politically cover the British debacle at Gallipoli. The rather far-fetched idea was to attack near İskenderun while or immediately after Gallipoli was abandoned. This would draw attention from the failure at the Dardanelles, making it appear that the British had only shifted their attack. No one would have been fooled.

Critics of Kitchener's new plan brought up political and military objections. The first complaint was that the French would object. The French viewed İskenderun as a part of Syria and saw all of Syria as theirs. When told that the British were considering action at İskenderun, the French military attaché expressed his government's demands: "the French were deeply interested in the question [of landing troops at

İskenderun], and would require a partial if not a preponderating control in its conduct."¹¹ The British did not wish to oppose their allies; but even more they did not want any action that might give the French control of İskenderun, which the British themselves still wanted.¹²

There were also purely military objections, mainly fanciful. Extremely faulty military intelligence had reported that the Turks "could produce 150,000 men at Alexandretta," in preparation for an attack on the Suez Canal and Egypt. Such a force would obviously preclude an attack on Cilicia if it existed, which it did not. Even more absurd, the Germans were believed to be preparing a force of 500,000 men to move to Syria and attack the Suez Canal. This was seriously stated at cabinet meetings, where it was asserted that British forces were needed in Egypt to protect the canal, not on a quixotic venture in Cilicia. ¹³

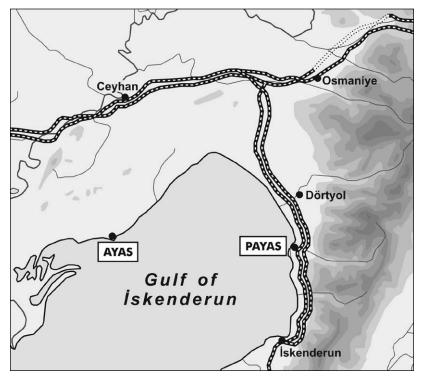
The critics once again held the day in the cabinet. Nevertheless, many of the advantages of a Cilician campaign would still have held true even while Gallipoli was being abandoned, if such a campaign could have been mounted successfully. But the men who would fight in Cilicia were the haggard, sick, and disheartened troops from Gallipoli, shifted immediately from one disaster to a new battle. The cabinet, rightly this time, rejected the plan:¹⁴

The War Office to inform Lord Kitchener that as a result of the Conference held in Paris on the 17th November, as well as consideration of the maritime position in the Mediterranean, His Majesty's Government have decided against the proposed expedition to Ayas Bay, and that his scheme should therefore be regarded under existing conditions as withdrawn in Lord Kitchener's further consideration of the strategied [sic] position in the Near East, in Turkey in Asia, and in Egypt.¹⁵

A CILICIAN CAMPAIGN

While some of the later plans had some merit, none of them were the correct approach to a campaign in Cilicia. Invasion of Cilicia should not have been in support of Gallipoli, nor to draw attention from Gallipoli. Cilicia should have been attacked instead of Gallipoli.

Very much unlike Gallipoli, Cilicia was a natural site for an amphibious landing. It afforded natural sites between Ayas and Payas for such a landing. The beach was extensive and the surrounding area relatively flat. High ground was an easy march of a few days from the beachhead. The area had no naval mines, and all the Ottoman mine-laying vessels

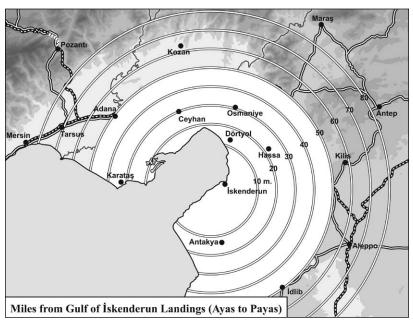


MAP 29.2. Gulf of İskenderun.

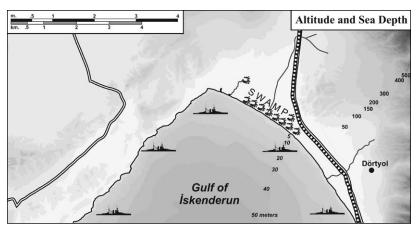
were in the Dardanelles.¹⁶ Because the British controlled the sea, mine layers could not reach Cilicia. The region had no fixed artillery positions that could threaten a landing and little mobile artillery of the type that so threatened the Gallipoli position.

Battleships and cruisers could draw very close to landing sites. Naval gunfire could penetrate far inland to cover the troops. Map 29.4 indicates how closely large ships could approach (in meters). Submarine attacks on the invasion fleet were a valid fear, although not acting due to fear of them would have precluded any naval action in the Mediterranean. In any case, Admiral H. B. Jackson, the First Sea Lord, told the cabinet that an invasion force could expect to have one week before any German submarines might appear. This was more than enough time to establish a beachhead and attack well inland. High ground could have been seized easily and the main road and rail connection taken, forcing the Ottomans to communicate with Iraq and southern Syria by very circuitous roads.

Lack of fresh water was a major problem at Gallipoli, but Cilicia had abundant water supplies. The temperature was only somewhat hotter in



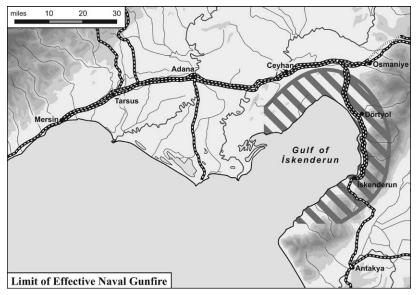
MAP 29.3. Miles from Gulf of İskenderun landings (Ayas to Payas).



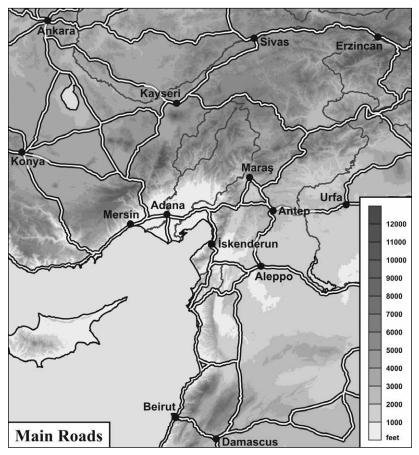
MAP 29.4. Altitude and sea depth at Gulf of İskenderun.

summer, and 10 degrees F (6 degrees C) warmer in winter. Gallipoli had twice as much rain in winter.

A British invasion force would have faced two difficulties: swamps and malaria. As seen on map 29.4, the swamps could have been easily circumvented. Malaria could not have been avoided, but losses could have been lessened if invasion took place outside the worst malaria season in



MAP 29.5. Limit, in miles, of effective naval gunfire.



MAP 29.6. Main roads.

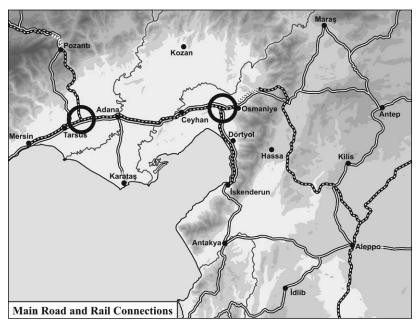
high summer. In any case losses due to disease could not have been as bad as they were at Gallipoli.

As Edward Erickson has demonstrated, the Ottomans had only a small number of soldiers in the Cilician region: "In effect, from mid-October 1914 through mid-April 1915, there were no Ottoman Army combat units (of battalion-size or larger) in Northern Syria and the Alexandretta area (modern İskenderun), capable of either coastal defence or counterinsurgency operations." ¹⁸ On April 9 three Ottoman regiments were in the area: one near Zeytun and one near Urfa, both fighting Armenian rebels, and only one in the İskenderun region. That meant that only 900 men were in the immediate vicinity of a British landing and 1,800 not far away, 2,700 in all. 19 In contrast, the Ottomans had 80,000 at Gallipoli at the time of that invasion. The reinforcements that could reach Cilicia fairly quickly, within weeks, were in Palestine. Had they removed north, the threat to the Suez Canal would have eased. The British advance in Palestine would have been hastened. If troops fighting farther away in Iraq had been withdrawn to face a British invasion in Cilicia, the battle at Ctesiphon and siege at Kut al-Amara would have been unlikely. Ottoman troops probably could not have been sent from eastern Anatolia: it was too far away, over mountains, and with no railroad transportation to the south. Had they nevertheless been able to move to Cilicia, they would not have been able to defeat the Russians at Malazgirt.

The British could have taken and held Cilicia. Even if they had been ejected, the effect of their invasion would have significantly changed the war in favor of the Allies. But it is doubtful that they would have been ejected.

Cilicia afforded two possibilities for action, both considered by the British: instead of the Gallipoli invasion in early spring 1915 or as an adjunct to it in spring 1915. An invasion in support of the Gallipoli campaign would have been much the worse of the two. As pointed out by critics, the British did not have enough ships and men to mount two major campaigns. Given the British dedication to Gallipoli, an attack in Cilicia would have been a small-scale affair. Railroads and telegraph lines would have been cut and some Ottoman soldiers diverted from other theaters, but the beachhead probably could not have been held.

As shown on map 29.7, two beachheads were possible if a main objective of the attack was to be achieved: east of Mersin and in the Gulf of İskenderun. Of the two, the Gulf of İskenderun was much the better choice. Disrupting Ottoman communication would have been a main goal of invasion. The Bay of İskenderun was closer to the main rail line. Capital ships could approach very close to the shore. (Map 29.4 indicates



MAP 29.7. Main road and rail connections.

the closest that battleships and cruisers could approach the shore.) Naval gunfire could reach well inland to high ground (map 29.5). A real benefit, although not of the sort envisaged by the British mind-set at the time, would be that an operation in Cilicia would of necessity be an amphibious landing. No Gallipoli-style purely naval attack could have been envisaged.

The weakness of the Ottomans and possibilities for the British were best exemplified by the voyage of the cruiser HMS *Doris*. In December 1914 and January, 1915 the *Doris*, under Captain Frank Larkin, was sent on detached duty to the northeast Mediterranean. He sent landing parties ashore north of İskenderun and blew up five railroad bridges, including one at the important center at Dörtyol, where the *Doris* also landed a party that occupied and destroyed the telegraph office at the railroad station. The only opposition that the landing party experienced was limited rifle fire. Unable to oppose Larkin, Ottoman officials were forced to allow his men to land without opposition and destroy two locomotives at İskenderun. Later the *Doris* exchanged shells with an Ottoman field gun with no effect. In January a landing party experienced the first serious opposition when it was fired upon by soldiers, leaving one dead. Later landing parties were more successful and captured prisoners. These

included Armenians who immediately went over to the Allied side and gave intelligence on Ottoman forces in the region. On very few occasions did the *Doris* or its landing parties experience anything but token opposition. The largest group of Ottoman soldiers encountered was two hundred men.²⁰

The British cabinet knew of the *Doris* and what its actions revealed of the situation in Cilicia and on the Syrian Coast. Ottoman defenses were poor and in many places nonexistent. The cabinet printed and discussed Larkin's reports, which should have shown how easily Cilicia could have been attacked. The cabinet seemed to have learned nothing from Larkin's experience, however, although his route would have been the best in terms of weather and malaria.

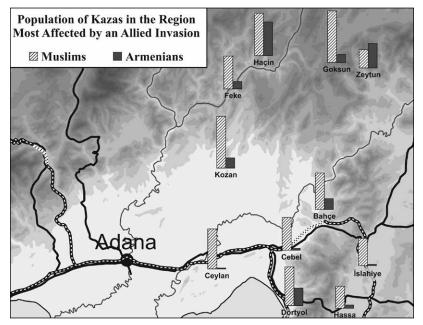
A very favorable time for a Cilicia invasion would have been at the same time as Gallipoli, in April 1915. A month before would have been even better.

THE ARMENIAN FACTOR

The British failed to consider the aid that Armenians could have provided in a Cilician invasion. They uniformly refused to listen to Armenians who knew local conditions. This was characteristic of the British. Before the war they were much interested in "Armenian reforms" but gave little evidence of actually respecting Armenian abilities or knowledge. They believed that changes to benefit Armenians should be the business of Europeans. The best example of this was the forced creation of "inspectorates" in eastern Anatolia in 1914, in which European governors were considered essential to create a dominant situation for Armenians. In World War I the British obviously believed in the Armenian cause but thought that the Armenians were incapable of helping in the war. Baldly put, they had no respect for the Armenians.

The Russians were quite different. They had no desire to foster the creation of an independent Armenia, but they were willing to make effective use of Armenians in eastern Anatolian campaigns. Armenians provided guides for Russian invaders, acted as guerrillas behind Ottoman lines, cut communications and supply lines, and joined as fighters in the Russian forces. The Russians recommended that the British make similar use of local Armenians and Armenian rebel organizations in an invasion of Cilicia.²¹

Armenians were a significant part of the Cilician population before the war. The Hunchak rebel leaders in the region had shown their

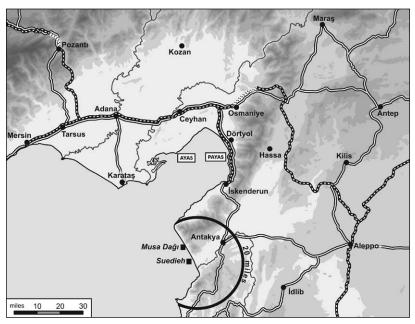


MAP 29.8. Muslim and Armenian populations of Kazas in the region most affected by an Allied invasion.

willingness to revolt against the government since the 1890s. The Hunchaks were especially strong in the north and south of the area. All indications were that the local Armenian population supported them and were willing to revolt if the possibility presented itself. At the start of the war the Hunchaks declared themselves to be "an ally of the Triple Entente" and offered to aid the Allied military in Cilicia and elsewhere ("to come down in the arena [Cilicia and eastern Anatolia] with a view to drown the Ottoman tyranny in blood").²² The Hunchak organization in Cairo and elsewhere knew the possibilities of a Cilician invasion, prepared plans for the attack, and offered significant support.

The driving force behind Armenian plans to aid the Allies was cooperation between Boghos Nubar, the leader of the Armenian delegation, and the Reformed Hunchaks,²³ led by Mihran Damadian. They joined in the Armenian National Defense Committee and did all they could to convince the British to invade in the northeast Mediterranean.²⁴ Boghos Nubar and the committee began to offer Armenians to fight there in November 1914.²⁵

In March 1914 the Armenians presented the British with a concrete plan. Armenians from Egypt, Bulgaria, Romania, Greece, and the United Cilicia 811



MAP 29.9. Disorder in Musa Dağı and Suedieh.

States would be brought by the British to Cyprus for military training. The British would then transport them to Cilicia, where they would join Armenians in the mountains to fight the Turks. British forces would occupy the Cilician ports and coast and move inland. Roads and railroads would first be cut by the Armenians, in order to hamper Ottoman troops advancing on the region, who would then would be replaced by British occupiers. British and Armenians would take passes at Beylan and the Cilician Gates.²⁶

The problem with the plan was that it extended too far and was too ambitious for an initial invasion. But it was a good starting point. The British cabinet wanted no part of it. From March to July the Armenians tried to convince the British and failed. They then presented a new, less ambitious plan:²⁷

- 12,000 Allied soldiers, 10,000 Armenians from Cyprus, and 20,000 local Armenians would attack;
- they would occupy Suedieh/Musa Dağı and Kassab;
- they would occupy Dörtyol and organize a serious resistance among the local Armenians;
- if this was successful, they would occupy İskenderun and the Beylan Pass;

 whether or not these plans were successful, the Armenians would act as guerrillas against the Ottomans in Cilicia, cutting telegraph and railroad lines.

The numbers of Armenian fighters available were surely exaggerated, although later enlistments in the Armenian Legion proved that thousands were available. Nevertheless, the plan was reasonable.

The cabinet again refused but was willing to give the plan further consideration. Mark Sykes was asked to evaluate it. He met with Nubar and Damadian in Cairo. Together they developed a new plan that would cost the British little:²⁸

- 5,000 Armenians were to be gathered on Cyprus (including 1,500 who had served in Ottoman and Bulgarian armies);
- 800 Armenians would seize Suedieh and cause disorder in a 20-mile radius;
- the remainder were to be landed between Ayas and Payas to act as guerrillas;
- the British would provide only munitions, transport, and naval cover;
- even if the plan was never used, concentration of an Armenian force on Cyprus would force Turks to divert troops from other theaters of battle.

The British said no.²⁹ The cabinet added that nothing should be done to encourage the Armenians.

It was soon too late. The Ottomans were not as oblivious to the dangers of an Armenian-assisted invasion as were the British. Armenians had begun to revolt in the region even without assistance from the British. Outbreaks had to be put down by regular troops. While the British discounted the possibilities of invasion and guerrilla war in Cilicia, the Ottomans did not. They responded to the danger from guerrilla attacks by removing the potential guerrillas. Armenians were relocated well away from the danger zone, in Syria and Iraq. By August 1915 the Armenians of Zeytun-Maraş, Kilis-Dörtyol, and Mersin were largely gone. No one was left to act as a guerrilla force or aid a British invasion. The opportunity was lost.

It is difficult to understand the British refusal to accept the assistance of the Armenians. The plans that the Armenians offered might have needed perfecting, but they were a good basis for a successful attack on the Ottomans. The final plan in particular merited action. It would have caused maximum disruption with little cost to the British. The only ex-

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planation for the cabinet's refusal is prejudice, a discounting of Armenian abilities that colored British decisions.

By invading Cilicia by themselves or with Armenian assistance, if they had been able to overlook their prejudices, the British could significantly have improved their military positions in Iraq and Palestine and perhaps brought the Middle Eastern war to a swifter conclusion. The choice of Gallipoli over Cilicia is a case study of following the dreams of politicians rather than the realities of military strategy.

NOTES

- Great Britain, National Archives (formerly Public Record Office), Cabinet Papers, London (hereafter CAB), 42/1/12, January 8, 1915. Extensive study of the region was made (CAB 42/2/12, "Committee of Imperial Defense: The War, Alexandretta, Note by the Secretary." The British had investigated the possibilities of a landing in the region as early as 1910 (CAB 36/16/12, July 14, 1910). See also G. H. Cassar, Kitchener's War, 120–24.
- The region of İskenderun Bay was charted by the British as far back as 1808. Charts
 and detailed information were updated throughout the nineteenth century. See,
 for example, Great Britain, National Archives (formerly Public Record Office),
 Foreign Office Papers, London (hereafter FO), 925/41056, MFQ 1/442/2, MPK
 1/267/3-8, WO 158/923, and WO 302/752.
- 3. CAB 42/1/16, January 13, 1915.
- 4. "The [Army] Council does not consider it as probable that any useful military purpose would be served by pursuing the scheme propounded by the Armenian Committee" (FO 371-2485, Culiti for War Council to Grey, London, April 15, 1915, and April 28, 1915).
- 5. The plans did not mention the French by name, but they were the only possible adversary. On the naval benefits of taking İskenderun, see CAB 42/2/13, Admiral H. B. Jackson, "Remarks on the Importance of Alexandretta as a Future Base."
- 6. "Lord Kitchener said that if we did not take Alexandretta, it would be better not to take Mesopotamia" (CAB 42/2/14, March 19, 1915).
- The plans, which were short on details, did not state whether this railroad would be the present line, which stretched across southeast Anatolia, or a new line.
- 8. CAB 42/2/10, "Committee of Imperial Defense: The War, Alexandretta and Mesopotamia, Memorandum by Lord Kitchener"; CAB 42/2/11, "Committee of Imperial Defense: The War, Alexandretta and Mesopotamia, Memorandum by the Admiralty." For an alternative view on seizing Alexandretta to benefit Iraq, see CAB 37/126/14, "Note by General Sir Edmund Barrow on the Defense of Mesopotamia."
- 9. CAB 42/5/1, "Subjects of Discussion and Conclusions of Meetings," 54th Meeting, November 23, 1915.
- 10. CAB 42/5/14, November 16, 1915. If the government would not send the men evacuated from Gallipoli to Cilicia, Kitchener noted, they might be sent to Salonika. Salonika, like Cilicia, had always been a better site for military action than

- Gallipoli. "Lord Kitchener's motive was to deliver a blow at Alexandretta before the abandonment of Gallipoli took place, which would discount our abandonment of the latter" (CAB 42/5/8, November 12, 1915).
- 11. CAB 42/5/10, November 13, 1915. On French wishes, see also the opinions of A. J. Balfour in CAB 42/2/14, March 19, 1915. The French also worried that an invasion fleet would be endangered by naval mines and submarines, although their communiqué gave no justification for their concern (communication from the French chargé d'Affaires, November 14, 1915, in CAB 42/5/20, November 23, 1915).
- 12. The French definitely wanted control of İskenderun. They demanded that the French, not the British, take the initiative in the region. Churchill agreed, perhaps temporizing until the British could lay claim to İskenderun later (Paul G. Halpern, *The Naval War in the Mediterranean 1914–1918*, 56–66).
- 13. CAB 42/5/12, November 15, 1915; and CAB 42/5/20, November 23, 1915. Edward Grey, secretary of state for foreign affairs, felt that, instead of helping to protect Egypt, a British presence in Cilicia would actually attract the German force of 500,000, because it would be easier for the Germans to attack there than in Egypt (CAB 42/5/8, November 12, 1915; CAB 42/5/12, November 15, 1915). The belief in this 500,000-man German expeditionary force also showed a serious deficiency in British intelligence on the war in Europe. The actions of the *Doris* (as noted below) demonstrated the actual weakness of Ottoman forces in the region.
- 14. CAB 42/5/8, November 12, 1915; and CAB 42/5/16, November 19, 1915.
- CAB 42/5/1, "Subjects of Discussion and Conclusions of Meetings," 53rd Meeting, November 20, 1915.
- 16. Despite being warned by the Admiralty to beware of mines, the *Doris* (see below) found none. Intelligence gathered by the ship stated that there were no mines (CAB 37/124/13, "H. M. S. 'Doris': Report of Proceedings Off the Syrian Coast, 14th to 27th December, 1914").
- 17. CAB 42/5/12, November 15, 1915.
- 18. Edward J. Erickson, "Bayonets on Musa Dagh," 537. This article contains a detailed analysis of Ottoman forces and Armenian rebellion in the region.
- 19. Ibid., 157-58; idem, "Captain Larkin and the Turks," 151-62.
- 20. This information has been drawn from CAB 37/124/13, "H. M. S. 'Doris': Report of Proceedings Off the Syrian Coast, 14th to 27th December, 1914"; and from Erickson's excellent article on the *Doris* ("Captain Larkin and the Turks"). See also W. L. Wyllie and M. F. Wren, *Sea Fights of the Great War*, 141; and FO 438/5, Cheetham to Grey, Cairo, January 3, 1915.
- 21. FO 371/2484, "Communicated by Count Benckendorff, February 24, 1915." Ambassador Alexander Konstantinovich Benckendorff communicated the wishes of foreign minister Sergei Sazanov. The Russian government felt that arming Armenians in Cilicia would be very important, but they could not do it themselves. They asked Britain and France to do it. Note how valuable Armenians were to the Russian efforts in attacking Turkish lines of communication. See also FO 371-2484, Russian Embassy to Grey, London, April 17, 1915, report that Hunchaks could provide 15,000 men. FO 371/2484 contains a number of letters between the Russians and the British on Armenians in Cilicia.

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22. Central Office of the Social Democratic Hintchak [Hunchak] Committee, "Proclamation by the Hintchak in the Paper of the Same Name," document no. 15.

- 23. The Reformed Hunchaks separated from the Hunchaks in 1896. On Boghos Nubar's belief that Armenians would rise and assist the Allies if they wished to conquer and retain Cilicia, see Vatche Ghazarian, ed. and trans., Boghos Nubar's Papers and the Armenian Question, 1915–1918, 5, 203.
- 24. Members of the committee and sympathizers were to be found in Europe and America. In the United States the main figure was Miran Sevasly, the chair of the Armenian National Council of America and president of the Armenian National Union.
- 25. FO 371-2484, Varandian to Grey, Sofia, February 20, 1915; FO 371/2484, Bax-Ironside telegram to Grey, Sofia, March 3, 1915. Varandian, an official of the Dashnaks (rivals of the Hunchaks), indicated support for a Cilician effort and offered men for the battle. Dashnaks in Cairo told Mark Sykes that the Dashnaks in America were prepared to raise 5,000 to 6,000 men to fight in Cilicia (FO 141/629, Sykes to Callwell, Cairo, July 16). The support of the Dashnaks showed how widespread Armenian support for the plan was.
- 26. FO 141/629, J. G. Maxwell to high commissioner, Cairo, July 5, 1915, enclosing a detailed letter on the plan for Cilicia from the Cairo Committee. The Russian ambassador in Washington informed the British that Armenians in America would send 1,000 men to aid at Cilicia (FO 371/2485, Spring-Rice [British ambassador in the United States] telegram to Whitehall, April 24, 1915). Armenians in Bulgaria offered their services in Cilicia but were rejected: "[Armenian Volunteers] Scheme is impracticable and you should avoid giving Armenian Committee any encouragement" (FO 371-2484, Foreign Office telegram to Bax-Ironside, London, March 12, 1915). On the Armenian plans, see also Arthur Beylerian, Les grandes puissances, 106–8.
- 27. FO 371-2485, Sevasly et al. to Grey, Boston, March 23, 1915; FO 371/2485, T. Moutafoff and A. Gambaragan for the Armenian Committee of National Defense to Maxwell, July 3, 1915, and Annexes; FO 371/2485, Boghos Nubar to Maxwell, Cairo, July 20 and 24, 1915, "Note du Comité de la Défense Nationale Arménienne sur la Cilicie" and "Notes sur une Opération Militaire en Cilicie." This plan was relayed to the British from Cairo (FO 141/629, McMahon to Grey, Ramleh July 19, 1915, enclosing a report from Maxwell on Armenian plans; FO 141/629, McMahon to Grey, Ramleh, July 27, 1915, enclosing the detailed Armenian plan). There are a large number of documents on the plan in FO 371/2485.
- 28. FO 371-2485, Sykes to Maxwell, Cairo, August 3, 1915. When this was received in Whitehall, officials commented on the cover of the document: "The War Office have expressed themselves as against any such movement," "not convincing," and "We cannot embark on any side campaigns [to Gallipoli]."
- 29. FO 371-2485, Culiti for War Council to Grey, London, April 15, 1915, and August 15, 1915.
- 30. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to describe the Armenian revolts in Zeytun, Maraş, Urfa, and elsewhere in the region. See Edward J. Erickson, "The Armenians and Ottoman Military Policy, 1915," 141–67; and idem, "Bayonets on Musa Dagh."

Forced Migration of Ottoman Armenians during World War I

How Security Concerns Affected Decision Making

Kemal Çiçek

Many aspects of the removal of Ottoman Armenians from the war zones to the internal parts of the Ottoman Empire during World War I have been widely discussed among scholars. Two main perspectives are in extreme contradiction with each other. One claims that the internment policy was aimed to exterminate Armenians, represented by scholars such as Vahakn Dadrian, Peter Balakian, and Richard Hovannisian. The other perspective, advocated by another group of scholars, believes that the policy was a military necessity under wartime conditions. Despite the bulk of scholarly work done by both parties, a detailed study of the local conditions, which would give us a clue about the perspective of the government, has not been carried out. Based on the wide range of documents in the Ottoman archives, this chapter focuses on local conditions and internal security concerns as the most probable reasons for the Ottoman government's decision to displace the Armenians.

This study is based on a detailed analysis of the reports referring to the incidence of clashes between Armenians and Muslims, crimes committed by army deserters and gang groups, and intelligence reports concerning an Armenian alliance with the Russian army.³ They all reveal that well-organized Armenian voluntary detachments and bands, consisting of army deserters assisted by the Russians along with other Armenian agents, prepared the ground for a full-scale rebellion in an effort to help the advancing Russian army long before the Ottoman Empire joined the war. The decision of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation to join

Russia (after the World Congress of eastern Armenians in Caucasia) inflamed the conflicts taking place between local Armenians and Muslims. By provoking Muslims against the Armenians and Armenians against the government Russia was able to destabilize the whole region. This chapter argues that security concerns and deteriorating conditions in major Ottoman cities played a crucial role in the decision of the government to remove Armenians to cities where they would no longer pose any danger for the army and the public.

The perception of Russia's aggressive intentions led the Ottoman state to immediate concerns over its Armenian population. This study presents three aspects of the Ottoman concerns: (1) Armenians as a fifth column; (2) internal security and Armenian insurgency; and (3) atrocities committed by Armenians against the Muslim civilian population.

By discussing each aspect, I draw attention to the conditions that led the Committee of Union and Progress to move Armenians from war zones and relocate them in the interior or in safer places within the empire.

ARMENIANS AS A FIFTH COLUMN

Although the Ottoman state avoided full-scale accusations against all Armenians (knowing that thousands of Armenians were serving in the Ottoman army), some people, like Ahmed Emin Yalman, referred to them as "the enemy within." The attitude of Armenian revolutionaries and their alliance with Russia during the war against their own state constituted the main basis for this labeling.⁵ As noted, one of the main goals of Russian foreign policy was to destabilize the Ottoman Empire with the aim of annexing some strategic areas (such as the eastern part of Anatolia) to its territories. In order to achieve its political goals, Russia turned the Kurds and the Armenians of the region against each other. The Armenians were relatively more useful for Russia's political interest, since they were divided between the two empires. Armenian nationals viewed the war conditions as an excellent opportunity for them to gain independence from the Ottoman Empire. Correspondingly, Sarkis Atamian stated that the Hunchaks had openly written in their party program: "The time for the general revolution [in Armenia] will be when a foreign power attacks Turkey externally."7

The Armenian dream of reviving the Empire of the Tigran served Russian interests.⁸ Russia's ambition was to reach the strategically important waters of the Mediterranean, which could only have been realized by

invading the Turkish Straits. The Berlin Treaty of 1878, however, made it clear to Russia that military occupation of Ottoman territories would not be enough to realize this goal. Therefore Russia continued to play the Armenian card, thinking that Europe would be silent about Russia's occupation or annexation of eastern Anatolia. But article 61 of the same treaty, when considered in light of Russia's victories over the Ottoman Empire in the Ottoman-Russian wars of 1828–29 and 1877–78, privileged Russia as the supervisor of the reforms to be implemented in the areas populated by Armenians. Thus it facilitated Russia's interference with the internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire. As Sean McMeekin has said: "Armenian groups maintained a façade of legality in Constantinople and through European committees in-exile, even as their provincial Turkish branches advocated open resistance against the Ottoman government in the name of winning 'freedom' (the Dashnaks) or 'independence' (the Hunchaks) for Armenians, the aim being to facilitate intervention by outside Powers."9

Incidents such as the assassination of Ottoman officials and massacres of Muslim civilians by Armenian revolutionaries forced the government to reassess the Armenian political position and take harsh measures.¹⁰ The relations became irrevocably tense with the establishment of the Hamidiye regiments composed of irregular armed forces from Kurdish tribes.11 In my view the Hamidiye regiments' position resulted in the increase of the sporadic clashes between Muslim Kurdish tribes and Armenian guerrilla bands, which developed into a civil war that eventually gained an international character.¹² For instance, the Armenian rebellion of Sasun in 1894, which cost the lives of 50,000 to 80,000 people according to European estimates (only 10,000 in official documents), was regarded as a rebellion and violently suppressed by the Hamidiye regiments.¹³ Unsurprisingly, these incidents were exploited by Russia and other European powers in order to intervene in the internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire. As McMeekin has noted, "Armenian revolutionary groups deliberately aimed to enlist outside powers in their cause by staging provocations." ¹⁴ An example is the memorandum sent by European ambassadors in 1897 to force Abdülhamid II to put reforms stipulated by the Berlin Treaty into effect.

Considering this a European project for interference with local autonomy, Sultan Abdülhamid II, however, was not willing to yield to political pressures from outside and did not go further than introducing a few administrative initiatives. As opposed to the Christian church, which

supported Armenian people by all means, the European states abstained from favoring the Armenian case with the conviction that a campaign for greater Armenian autonomy would ultimately serve the Russian interest. Hence Russia alone provided as much military and financial support for Armenian revolutionaries as it could. Armenian revolutionaries increased their attacks on Ottoman officials and Muslim civilians and turned the strife into a bloody civil war, while remaining hand in glove with the Russians throughout the events leading up to World War I.

Following the outbreak of World War I, both the ARF and Hunchaks betrayed their own state by planning to engage in unlawful activities. The ARF's announcement that it would support the Ottoman Empire in case of a war with Russia was made during its eight congresses in Erzurum but was contradicted at the World Congress of Eastern Armenians, which gathered only a month later than the congress of Erzurum in Tbilisi in September 1914. The McMeekin describes the Armenian stance during the war as follows: "[T]here was little question where the loyalty of most Armenians lay worldwide. The Russian diplomatic archives bulge with letters of support for the tsar sent in by Armenian leaders after the outbreak of the war in August." 16

The announcement of the Tbilisi Bureau of Dashnaktsutyun, in a proclamation circulated as early as November 30, 1914, offers definite evidence of Armenians fighting in Russian units against the Ottoman army.¹⁷ The Ottoman 3rd Army's intelligence reports also noted similar developments in the area: Armenian youths in eastern Anatolia in particular declined to take up arms in the Ottoman army and instead either joined Armenian bands or crossed the border to join Armenian volunteers in Caucasia. A short while later steady streams of Armenian youths began to desert their army units and switched sides by joining the Russians. 18 A telegram to Istanbul states that Surin and Hacik, two Armenians from Bayezit, crossed the border and were reported to have recruited 2,000 armed men each, equipped by Russians. 19 Another example among a number of documents on the issue reveals that an 800man band of raiders, composed of Ottoman and Russian Armenians, was armed by the Russian government and left Batum for the Artvin region. They were employed to go to Artvin and Ardanuc to raise the number of these volunteers to 7,000 in order to disturb security in the region.²⁰ The security forces in the area seized a lot of Russian manufactured weapons in the houses of Armenian rebels. The huge amount of these weapons and ammunition implied full-scale preparations for a war against the

Ottoman army.²¹ On the basis of Russian archival documents McMeekin estimates that 50,000 Ottoman Armenians, guided by ARF guerrillas, crossed the border even before Turkey entered the war.²² Accordingly, Armenian historians and Boghos Nubar Paşa, head of the Armenian National Delegation in Paris in 1919, have estimated the number of Armenian soldiers fighting in the Russian army to be between 200,000 and 250,000.²³

Bands set up by those who had deserted the Ottoman army and fought in support of a national Armenia provided additional proof of Armenian treason against the Ottoman state. This enormously worried the state officials, who feared a full-scale rebellion.²⁴ Armenian voluntary units gathered under the command of various leading Armenian guerrilla and political leaders, among whom were Antranig Toros Ozanian, Karekin Pastermajian (aka Armen Garo or Karo), Drastamat Kanayan, Hamazasp, Arshak Gafavian (aka Keri), and Sargis Mehrabyan (aka Vartan), soon reached over 20,000. They expressed willingness to fight against the Ottoman Empire as early as 1914. The American ambassador in Istanbul, Henry Morgenthau, estimated the number of Armenian rebels within the country to be around 25,000.25 Rebel leaders like Ozanian (who fought against the Ottoman army during the Balkan Wars and committed massacres against Muslim Turks) and Pastermajian (a former member of the Ottoman parliament from the CUP and a close friend of Talat Paşa) acted as commanders in the voluntary Armenian units. They all served under the command of Russian generals, who charged them with the task of operating behind Ottoman army lines and harassing Muslim civilians.²⁶

The historical evidence shows that the Russians advanced into Ottoman territory with the help of Armenians who supported them by any means possible. Pastermajian himself openly admits that the Armenians served as a fifth column: "[I]f it was not for the fourth battalion of Armenian volunteers under the command of the matchless Keri, the Turkish army would have reached Sarikamish a day earlier and confronted only one battalion of Russian reserves that was without artillery, and thus would not be defeated." This was not the only Armenian blow against the Ottoman army. Pastermajian describes the campaign of Halil Bey around Urmiye against a Russian brigade under the command of the Armenian general Toymas Nazarbekoff. The first battalion of the Armenian volunteers, under the command of Ozanian, repulsed the attacks of Halil Bey for three days until the Russians arrived from the Caucasus and caused the flight of his forces. In this battle the Ottoman forces lost

3,600 soldiers before the Armenian trenches in the course of those three days of fighting.

These examples can be multiplied with reference to many other occasions on which Armenian insurgents fought against the Ottoman army and rendered services to the Russians as a fifth column. A particular example of Armenian treason occurred in the city of Van in April 1915. The Armenian voluntary units lay siege to the city, captured it a month later, and forced the Ottoman garrison (commanded by Cevdet Bey) out. Worst of all, the city was handed over to Russia after three other battalions of Armenian volunteers commanded by Major-General Nikolaev, the commander of the corps of the Russian army, arrived in the city to help Armenian units. As Pastermajian bluntly stated:

[I]t is an undisputed fact that if the Armenians of Van in April, 1915, by their heroic resistance had not kept busy that one division of regular Turkish troops and thousands of Kurds, and had made it possible for them to join the army of Halil Bey, the Turks undoubtedly would have been able to crush the Russian forces in Persia and reach Baku in a few weeks, for the simple reason that from the banks of the Araxes to Baku the Russians had no forces at all, while the local Tartar inhabitants, armed and ready, were awaiting the coming of the Turks before rising en masse to join them.²⁸

These incidents serve as obvious evidence not only of an Armenian alliance with Russia but of an alliance with the Allied powers. Correspondence between insurgent Armenians in Zeytun, France, and England reveals that the Allies were invited to launch an amphibious operation in the Gulf of İskenderun and that the Allies, as confirmed by British and French archival documents, had seriously considered occupying İskenderun with the help of 40,000 Armenian voluntary units. Moreover, targeting Istanbul, the Ottoman capital, the Allies attacked at the Dardanelles in the spring of 1915.²⁹ The treacherous attitude of the Armenians was echoed in the famous telegram that Enver Paşa, the chief of the General Staff, had sent to Talat Paşa, the minister of interior affairs, suggesting that they take certain measures against Armenians, including deportation. Enver Paşa justified his case by claiming that these measures were needed because some of the Armenians who were living near the war zones had obstructed the activities of the Imperial Ottoman Army, which had been entrusted with defending the frontiers against the country's enemies.³⁰

INTERNAL SECURITY AND ARMENIAN INSURGENCY

This section discusses the extent of the threat perceived by the Ottoman state and the matter of internal security in the context of World War I. In an article inquiring whether national security necessitated the relocation of the entire Armenian population in eastern Anatolia during World War I Edward J. Erickson concludes that it was an "imperative military necessity." ³¹ He goes on to suggest that the Ottomans were at war with Russia on the Caucasian frontier, the British in Mesopotamia and Palestine, and all allied navies in the Dardanelles, so the "Ottoman state perceived the situation as posing an existential threat to its national security."32 Moreover, the defense of the eastern parts of the empire was crucial for the very existence of the integrity of the Ottoman state and the army, because the supply lines for the three strategic fronts were all running directly through the region. Erickson argues that "none of the Ottoman armies on the fronts in Caucasia, Mesopotamia or Palestine was self-sufficient in food, fodder, ammunition or medical supplies, and all were dependent on the roads and railroads leading west to Istanbul and Thrace for those supplies."33

Apart from hindering military operations, as the documents from Russian and Ottoman archives show, Armenians began causing unrest among civilians, killing innocent women and children, especially in eastern Anatolia, months before the law of relocation had been introduced.³⁴ After the signing of the Reform Treaty between Russia and the Ottoman Empire on February 8, 1914, which left the administration of six Ottoman vilayets to two European inspectors, the Armenian rebels intensified their military-style attacks on Muslim settlements in order to provoke the Europeans.³⁵ One document from the city of Trabzon, for instance, reports that Armenian rebels under the leadership of Arakil, the son of Eksioğlu Setrak, had been terrorizing the local population in remote areas between the districts of Yomra of Trabzon and Oltu of Erzurum. On October 5, 1914, Armenian rebels attacked a stagecoach coming from Trabzon to Erzurum, around Gümüşhane, killed the mailman, and ran away with the mail. Armenian gangs were advancing by pillaging and destroying the Muslim villages, massacring even babies in their cradles.³⁶

Manifestations of rebellion in southern parts of the region were noted. An Ottoman army report informs us that the rebellions that broke out in the vicinity of Van could not be put down by the local security forces for two months, and the ensuing anarchy was spreading into the city center. It further states that rebels led by Hunchak and Dashnak

committee leaders, coming mostly from Russia, had carried out bomb attacks on soldiers and civilians alike.³⁷ As for the actors responsible for the attacks, the report states: "Apart from well known band leaders like Antranig, Garo Pastermajian and Hampartsum Boyajian, local band leaders, namely Kegork from Malatya, a pharmacist, Rupen, and Surpen from Beyazit, had been continuously attacking people and border battalions." ³⁸

Other reports reveal the extent of atrocities committed by Armenian bands in rural areas. These rebels were killing Muslim soldiers who were discharged from the army or under medical treatment. The brutal killing of Sabri Efendi, first lieutenant of the Mantelli artillery battalion, is only one example of the extreme violence committed by the Armenians. He had been cut into pieces and then burned by an Armenian landlord named Bedros in the village of Hösmasa.³⁹ On another occasion Armenian volunteer units, refusing to yield to the government's orders any longer, killed soldiers and gendarmes in Sekûr village of Karkar district. Eight other gendarmes sent to the village after this incident were also martyred.⁴⁰

Similar incidents also took place in Muş, Hizan, Korsor village, and Gevaş, after which a strong gendarme detachment led by the Bitlis Gendarme Regiment commander and two other detachments from Van and Gevaş had to be sent to Hizan. 41 Another instance of heavy fighting took place near Kümes village in the Akâan district between gendarme units and Dashnak militias. 42 In another case the Dashnak committee militias besieged a house containing the gendarme detachment and the district governor and kept them under gunfire for eight hours. Nine of the Ottoman gendarme soldiers were killed and the house was set on fire. The governor and the other gendarme soldiers with him in the house managed to run away in the dark. The detachments sent from Muş to capture the criminals failed to find them. The fugitives under the command of Rupen (the delegate of the Muş Dashnak committee) and Esro (one of the leaders of the Mus Dashnak committee who started attacking nearby villages) threatened security. Forces dispatched to the area in order to capture fugitives under the command of Lt. Ahmet Efendi also met heavy gunfire, killing him and four soldiers. The remaining Ottoman soldiers escaped death only after fresh units were sent to the area for support on February 27, 1915. 43 Another four gendarme soldiers, who were traveling to Sasun from Muş, were attacked and slaughtered by Armenians of Geligüzan on February 26, 1915.44

Army intelligence reports testify to an even larger-scaled upheaval, indicating that Dashnaks issued orders to its branches calling upon all

Armenian boys above the age of thirteen to take up arms and join the rebellion. The testimonies of the Armenians at the War Court held after the Sivas incidents reveal that the uprisings were intended to start first in Van, Bitlis, Erzurum, and Şebinkarahisar then include Sivas, Kayseri, and Diyarbakır. The Ottoman archival records document that Armenian rebels opened fire on a unit sent to recruit soldiers in certain cities in southeast Anatolia in early February 1915. 45 Rebels in Muş using the Arak Monastery as a base attacked gendarmes. On February 16, 1915, rebels and army deserters suddenly attacked the government offices, telegraph lines, and ammunition depots in Zeytun. Soldiers dispatched to the area were met with heavy gunfire, killing nearly a hundred of them. In February in Develi of Kayseri a bomb exploded in the home of Kegork Hamparsumyan, who had recently returned from America and was apparently making the bomb. In subsequent investigations carried out in various places in Develi more than 146 burner and wick bombs and 26 dynamite bombs, along with 220 Martin, Mannlicher, and Mauser rifles, were confiscated. 46 There was enough evidence to indicate a planned rebellion among Armenians of Karcikan and Gevaş districts of Van. Telegraphic cables were destroyed and a corporal was assassinated, after which the district governor and his retinue were obliged to take up arms and captured many army deserters. These attacks on civilians and army posts caused enormous anxiety among the public living in eastern cities and towns, whose demands for protection by more soldiers and tribal forces were reflected in numerous cables sent to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, with no response from the government.⁴⁷ All these incidents, indicating the increasing potential for a full-scale internal war in the area, disturbed the psychology of many soldiers in military service, in particular after receiving news that their families were being massacred at home. As a result a great number of soldiers deserted their units and returned home to protect their families.

The uprising in Zeytun in February 1915 is a significant one, laying bare how such incidents posed a threat to internal security. Erickson's study of British, German, and Turkish archival sources on the operations of ships in the eastern Mediterranean has shown that Armenians were spying and assisting the British navy to launch an amphibious attack on the Turkish Gulf of İskenderun. Under these circumstances Ottoman army officials assessed that the main points of upheaval were at a day's distance from the borders, which necessitated the dispatch of more army forces to those regions to prevent the army from being caught in a cross-fire. The Armenians' constant correspondence with the Armenians in the

Russian army enabled them to spy on the Ottoman army. The Armenian bands around Erzurum were forcing the Armenian villagers to move to Russia or join their bands. It was also evident that the Dashnak committee members, who had been crossing the borders with their followers in the direction of Van and Bitlis, were Armenians living in the villages scattered around the Muslim villages in order to cross the border secretly.

In the spring of 1915 Armenian rebellions in eastern Anatolia began to jeopardize military operations at every level. Reports reveal that Armenians coming from America, Bulgaria, and even Romania had joined the Russian forces voluntarily. They were under the leadership of Pastermajian (former member of parliament from Erzurum). Ozanian and his friends, notorious for their atrocities in and around Edirne during the Balkan Wars, terrorized people and demolished all Muslim villages along the border, particularly Bayezit. A detailed report sent to the general headquarters by the 10th Army Corps on March 27, 1915, states that the "Armenian Tashnaksutyun [Dashnaktsutyun] Committee has set up a secret revolutionary society in the province of Sivas. Its main aim is to cause turmoil in the regions behind the Ottoman lines and thus to ease the advancement of the enemy; the members of the mentioned society have been equipped with various weapons."49 It is no wonder that Russia played the most important role in the Armenian upheaval. Nuri Bey reported as early as September 13, 1914, that agents of Russia had begun their operations in the region and were inciting Armenians to rebellion. An Armenian rebel leader, Aramays of Gümrü, who had been sentenced to 101 years and sent to Siberia by the Russians, had been released and sent to Kars to fight against the Turks. There he was able to recruit a large number of Armenians to his gang, armed them, and sent them to the villages near the Seynihan line, disguised as Pasin villagers. They advised the villagers to be disloyal to their own state and join Aramays's bands.⁵⁰

Mahmud Kamil Paşa, commander of the 3rd Army, described the local conditions in his coded message to the Ministry of Defense on July 19, 1915:

The cities of Erzurum, Trabzon, Van, Bitlis, Elazığ, Diyarbakır, and Sivas are the regions of war in the east. As the war campaign is carried out in this region, the supplies needed for the army are provided from those cities. The Armenians living in Erzurum, Van, and Bitlis have shown their real faces by deserting and joining the enemy forces, massacring the people on the roads by forming gangs, pillaging and plundering the depots. It has become evident

by the discovery of the weapons, bombs, and explosives that the Armenians in Sivas, Diyarbakır, and Elazığ have been pursuing the same aim...I believe that the presence of those villains in the regions where our army provides its supplies poses a great threat to the army's provision channels and jeopardizes the security of the army.... In the light of these circumstances, and to prevent worsening consequences of the events, I hereby request the relocating of the Armenians living in the cities mentioned above in Aleppo and Mosul and help for immediate issuing of the due orders to be given by the army to the governors and their approvals for the task.⁵¹

The resistance and uprising launched by Armenian rebels in February 1914 had gradually taken on a military character, which ended up in the outbreak of a civil war by late 1915. In order to ensure the security of the Ottoman 3rd Army on the Russian Front, as well as to secure its forces from coming under dual fire from Russians at the front and Armenian rebel forces from the rear, the Ottoman state was obliged to distance the Armenians from the war zones. The Ottoman cabinet's decision to transfer and relocate Armenians from war zones shows that coercive political circumstances necessitated the removal:

[S]ome of the Armenians residing near the regions bordering the battle lines have been jeopardizing the maneuvers of the Ottoman army, which is trying to defend the Ottoman borders against the enemy forces, by slowing down the transfer of provisions and military equipment, being willing to cooperate and act in union with the enemy, joining the enemy forces, organizing armed assaults on the armed forces and the innocent people in the country, providing the enemy navy with supplies, and boldly showing the fortified areas to the enemy. Therefore the insurgent elements ought to be forced to withdraw from the theater of operations.⁵²

Mehmed Münir Bey's report, indicating the rapidly growing number of followers and sympathizers of the Armenian committees among Ottoman Armenians, represents the army officials' perspective on the Armenian issue.⁵³ These committees' efforts to unite with the enemy forces and load the country secretly with all kinds of weapons and ammunition began even before the participation of the Ottoman government in World War I. These acts led to an inevitable increase in tension between

Armenians and Muslims. This ended up creating hatred between the two communities, which had cohabited in peace until then. The Ottoman government began to take security measures to protect Muslim civilians against the Armenian attacks. Münir Bey considered the Ottoman government's decision to remove the Armenians to internment camps within the interior parts of the empire to be the direct consequence of the crimes committed by Armenian committees.

The Executive Order of May 27, 1915, removed first only committee members and then male Armenians from strategic areas to camps in and out of towns in the eastern parts of the empire. Many people consider this a mistake. ⁵⁴ But many officials like Mehmed Münir Bey believed that the majority of Armenians, if not all of them, were unified behind the realization of their national cause to establish an independent Armenian state. Therefore the government would not risk army operations when there was imminent danger of being caught between two fires. The following coded telegram received from the governor of Adana is very striking in this sense:

Three Armenians have been caught as they were attempting to take refuge on an enemy battleship on February 12, 1915, in Dörtyol region: namely, Ibrahim, a teacher from Adana, and Artin and Bedros from Dörtyol. Someone called Agop from Dörtyol was caught by our military patrols among the reeds on the shore in the same region on February 24, 1915. This person in his testimony said that they were dispatched to take refuge on board the enemy battleship in order to reveal the Turkish army positions. He furthermore claimed that he was acting in line with the decisions taken at the meetings of the Hunchak Committee. ⁵⁵

To sum up, unlawful commitments displayed by Armenian militias posed a real threat to three Ottoman army divisions that were responsible for coastal defense and internal security. Local military detachments failed to avert the first uprising, which began on February 10, 1915, in Zeytun. A telegram dated March 8, 1915, stated that an undetermined number of army deserters and local gangs had attacked, beaten, and confiscated arms of some Ottoman gendarmeries in and around Zeytun. On March 1, 1915, around 70 army deserters attacked government buildings in the district. The local forces requested that 250 fresh soldiers be dispatched to the district in order to demonstrate the strength of the Ottoman military presence. But rebels threatened to kill all civilians if any

soldiers were dispatched from Maraş. The rebellion was out of control, so the gendarmes increased the number of the requested forces from 250 to 600. Yet the Ottoman army was unable to send new forces, and clashes spread to the neighboring towns and villages. Insurgent Armenians killed many Ottoman soldiers, including Süleyman Efendi, the commander of the gendarmerie. 56 The clashes, in which dozens of people died, could be stopped only after a month. Consequently the military authorities suggested that the Armenians of Zeytun should all be sent into exile for their participation in the rebellion.⁵⁷ These clashes spread to other parts of the empire.⁵⁸ Armenian rebellions broke out in Diyarbakır, Sivas, and other cities that were strategically important for the operations of the Ottoman 4th Army against the British. For instance, an uprising of 30,000 Armenians was plotted in Sivas in order to cut the lines of retreat of the Ottoman Caucasus Army. In certain cities Armenian rebels attacked government buildings like the Ottoman Bank, the Public Debt Office, the Office of the Tobacco Monopoly, and the Post Office and Telegraph buildings.59

Armenian revolutionary activities were not confined to the eastern parts of the empire; they were quite active even in the very vicinity of Istanbul. Seizure of a huge arsenal of illegal weapons belonging to Armenian committees in areas far from frontlines proves the dimensions of the danger posed to internal security. Around İzmit, for instance, a town close to Istanbul, thousands of bombs and unlicensed weapons were discovered during weapons searches, while high-explosive devastation bombs as well as many smaller bombs and weapons were found at the theological seminary at the Armise Monastery. 60 According to a document dispatched from Tekirdağ, Agopian, an Austrian protégé and deputy of the region, personally took part in the seizure of the arms of the Workers' Battalions in Beylik Depots. The same report also reveals that the General Directorate of National Police Organization confirmed some information about an Armenian at the Corlu Railway Station who was helping Greek and Armenian smugglers by facilitating their escape in disguise of an engineer. According to the reports reaching the Ministry of the Internal Affairs in 1915, bombs and weapons were seized in many parts of Bursa as well.⁶¹

It is instructive to note that the newspaper *Meşveret* in Trabzon on June 27, 1915, reported that the Ottoman state was acting to prevent incitement of Armenians by agents from outside the country, to block their possible involvement with enemy states, and to preserve the order and security of the country.⁶² Significantly, this announcement indicates that

the internment was executed not only for the security of the state but also for the welfare of Armenian society itself. Discussing the same issue, Ilber Ortaylı claims that one of the main purposes of the displacement of Armenians was to put an end to the clashes between Muslims and Armenians but also that the government failed to differentiate between the rebel and loyal citizens. The unlawful commitments and the threat posed to both civilian and military targets by the Armenians, as noted above, prove beyond doubt that Armenian insurrection was a fact. It would be very naïve to define their activities just as self-defense, as some historians argue today.⁶³ The recollections of Pastermajian and other rebel leaders do not justify such a defensive interpretation.⁶⁴ To update Guenter Lewy's claim, "when all is said and done we are left without firm knowledge as to whether the various guerrilla forces known to have operated in Anatolia were part of a general insurrection; the open-and-shut case claimed by Turkish authors is not substantiated." This study asserts that recently opened files in the Ottoman archives leave no possibility for substantiating such views.65

ATROCITIES COMMITTED BY ARMENIANS AGAINST THE MUSLIM CIVILIAN POPULATION

It must be reiterated that some of the main reasons for the relocation or internment of the Armenians were the "bloody clashes" and deterioration of relations between Muslims and Armenians. Another reason, as was clearly stated by Enver Paşa in his well-known telegram of May 2, 1915, was the deportation of Muslims from the city of Van and its vicinity by Armenian voluntary forces in the aftermath of the occupation of Van. Having said this, however, it should not be forgotten that it was the massacres of the Muslim civilians by Armenian committees in and around Van that led the state to decide to evacuate Armenians from eastern Anatolia. The Ottoman archival sources illustrate to what extent these massacres affected the Ottoman government's decision making.

According to the data collected by the Ottoman state, 122,282 Muslims were killed by the Armenian bands from the beginning of the war to June 1915, the date on which the relocation law was issued in the official gazette. Military archives also offer large numbers of documents on atrocities committed against the Muslim population. A document dated March 15, 1915, for instance, displays evidence of the extermination of the entire population of Mirkeho village of Özalp district in Van by Armenian bands. Forty-seven men and eighteen women were identified

in the ashes. In the village of Astoci seven men and four women were killed, while five women were raped. In the villages of Saray and Esedboyu mosques were converted into stables.⁶⁷

Atrocities committed by Armenians in villages in the district of Saray were beyond imagination. According to the list prepared by Kaymakam Kemal, nine people were brutally massacred. The detailed report is horrendous. In Kavlik village of the Saray district in Van Hacı Molla Said was forced to kill his own daughter; each time he refused to obey the orders the perpetrators, they cut off limbs. In Şezuhane village Cündi Agha's maid Asmo was burned in the kiln together with her child. Miha's spouse Fato in Yamanyurt village was choked to death together with her three children. Mehmet Abdi's spouse Abese of the village of Belecek was killed by cutting her arms off. Hanım Hatun, daughter of Maho, in the village of Belecek was taken away after being raped by the guerrilla leader Antranig. Nezu Hatun in the village of Perâkal lost her sanity when she was forced to serve her two grandchildren's flesh, burned in the kiln, to their parents, who were killed upon their refusal to eat. 68

Armenian insurgents were equally brutal toward people under their protection. One document reports that the number of Muslims committed to Armenian guards and massacred by them after being subjected to physical torture and being struck with rifle-butts reached 30,000. Armenians serving in the Ottoman army were deliberately surrendering to Russians to disclose information about the army. And Armenians from the Caucasus were allowing themselves to be taken prisoners before escaping and delivering to the Russians the intelligence that they gathered.⁶⁹ Another telegram reports that Russians and Armenian bandits being forced back from Hasankale to their own frontiers killed some of the 2,000 Muslims that they took away and drove the remaining ones to some inland destination. In Erzurum the Russians and Armenian bandits executed nine people and sent the whole male population over fourteen to an unknown place. In the subdistrict of Pekreç a self-appointed Armenian tribunal sentenced some 300 to 400 people to the gallows and hanged them. In the surroundings of Aşkale, Tercan, Ilica, Tavuskerd, and Arvin no Muslim was left alive. After having killed about 200 women and children in Van, Armenians massacred 8,000 to 10,000 Muslims in the valley of Mahfuran. The entire population of the village of Hot on the boundary of Narman was exterminated with machine guns. The majority of immigrants living in Marhi Sufla village near Bitlis were put to the sword. The villages of Cinis, Pezantan, Ergani, and Şemerşeyh were burned with all of their inhabitants. Seriously ill children under treatment in Bitlis Hospital were savagely slain. In the village of Balıkan

corpses were thrown for the dogs to feed on. In Çukur women and girls were raped and old people burned. Small children were bayoneted, and many massacres were committed. These reports are given in copies of dispatches sent by the governorships of Trabzon, Erzurum, Bitlis, Mamuretülaziz, and Diyarbakır.⁷⁰

According to telegrams sent from the provinces of Diyarbakır and Trabzon, Armenian bandits and Russians assaulted the Muslim population, raped women, forced old people and small children in their houses and then burned them, profaned and destroyed mosques and saints' sepulchers, and grilled corpses, cut them into pieces, and then forced the survivors to eat them.⁷¹ Investigations made by the governor of Mardin revealed that Armenians and Russians engaged in massacres of men, women, and children. They chopped up bodies and threw them into earth ovens to burn them. The bandits under the command of Aremek killed the whole population of about 80,000 in a village that had surrendered.⁷² While retreating before the advance of the Ottoman army, Armenian bandits, especially those led by General Antranig, attacked the villages of Bedrevans, Kalender, İslâmsor, Ahalik-i Ulya, Hoşu, Zanzak, Sıçankala, Ağviran, Zivin, Menevürt, Zars, Gerek, and Azab and killed or captured 10,000 people. Those taken prisoners were never heard of again. The murdered prisoners were crowded into houses and stables or in riverbeds, shot and bayoneted, then cut into pieces. Some of them were drenched with gasoline and set on fire. Children's ears and noses were cut off. Some were nailed down through their chests and bayoneted or had their throats slit. Women were tortured and had their breasts cut off. Only a few people narrowly escaped death. The Armenian bandits had pillaged all the goods, chattels, and provisions of these villages, looting and destroying and burning thousands of houses, shops, and mosques and stealing hundred thousands of oxen, calves, cows, buffalos, horses, mares, donkeys, lambs, goats and provisions of 100,000 bushels of wheat and barley. Money by the ten thousands of Ottoman liras, thousands of gold coins, women's jewelry, hundreds of mattresses, honeycombs, copper wares, and seventy carpets were also stolen from the mosque of the town of Ağviran.⁷³ In another incident a small gendarmerie detachment was attacked by an Armenian gang of thirty between Maras and Zeytun. They killed six gendarmes, while recruits going to Zeytun escorted by two gendarmerie guards were detained in a church by the people of Zeytun.⁷⁴

Numerous documents were prepared on the spot about massacres committed by Armenian bands and volunteer forces. The long lists of murdered and imprisoned people kept by the Ottoman provincial officers seem to have reported all mass killings and details of massacres. The

documented evidence of the massacre of Muslims as well as the pressure from local officials appears to have affected the decision of the central government to resettle the Armenians. Indeed Talat Paşa wrote in his memoirs that reports about the massacre of Muslim civilians had deeply affected their decision on the deportation of Armenians.⁷⁵

CONCLUSION

The removal of populations during war is a grave and daunting task for both the decision makers and the soldiers who are enforcing it on the ground. For the Ottoman administration it was not a matter of aspirations to protect overseas interests through a campaign, as was the case for European powers on several occasions throughout the history of imperialism. Instead it was the immediate danger posed to the internal security of the Ottoman heartland in Anatolia that necessitated the implementation of a law of relocation as a last resort. Edward Erickson, an expert on military history, considers this crucial decision to be a possible result of the Ottoman government's lack of success in resolving the issue, due to its weakened army power. He claims that "in the immediate past the empire had solved the problem of insurgency by sending in large armies of up to 100,000 regular soldiers and paramilitary cavalrymen." This was obviously impossible under the circumstances of 1915, because the empire had lost its regular forces and the gendarmerie.

The Armenian atrocities threatened the families of the soldiers at home and as a result increased the number of escapees from the army. Advised by the General Staff on the severity of the matter, the Ottoman government was left with little choice but to remove people from the war zone as "an alternative counterinsurgency strategy." In other words, they applied the European model of counterinsurgency policies, which involved the relocation of civilian populations as a viable, effective, and acceptable wartime security practice. Thus the Ottomans followed suit and to save itself did what Spain had done in Cuba (1893), the United States in the Philippines (1900–1902), and Britain in South Africa (1899–1901).⁷⁷

NOTES

- 1. Vahakn N. Dadrian, *The History of the Armenian Genocide*; Peter Balakian, *The Burning Tigris*; Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Armenian Genocide in Perspective*.
- 2. Kemal Çiçek, *The Great War and the Forced Migration of Armenians*; Yusuf Halaçoğlu, *Ermeni Tehciri ve Tarihi Gerçekler*; Bülent Bakar, *Ermeni Tehciri*;

- Yücel Güçlü, Armenians and the Allies in Cilicia, 1914–1923; Justin McCarthy, Esat Arslan, Cemalettin Taşkıran, and Ömer Turan, The Armenian Rebellion at Van.
- Edward J. Erickson, "The Armenians and Ottoman Military Policy, 1915"; idem, "The Armenian Relocations and Ottoman National Security."
- 4. Ahmed Emin Yalman, Turkey in the World War, 214.
- Ibid., 215. Yalman writes that "when the World War broke out it was generally known that the Armenians were warm supporters of the Entente. This point is not contested by anybody."
- 6. Richard G. Hovannisian, Armenia on the Road to Independence, 1918, 4.
- 7. Sarkis Atamian, The Armenian Community, 96; cited in Tal Buenos, "Genovive," 321.
- 8. The Empire of the Tigran refers to Tigranes the Great, who ruled Armenia during the first century BC. Under his reign the Kingdom of Armenia for a short time became the strongest state east of the Roman Republic expanding beyond its traditional boundaries, from the Caspian Sea to the eastern Mediterranean. Noubar Maxoudian, "Early Armenia as an Empire."
- 9. Sean McMeekin, The Russian Origins of the First World War, 142.
- Recep Karacakaya, Kaynakçalı Ermeni Meselesi Kronoloji (1878–1923) (Istanbul: Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 2001), 18.
- 11. I am of the opinion that their establishment was the result of Armenian revolutionary activities, not vice versa. Cevdet Ergül, II. Abdülhamid'in Doğu Politikası ve Hamidiye Alayları; Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey, 246.
- 12. See also McMeekin, The Russian Origins of the First World War, 143.
- 13. See Musa Şaşmaz, İngiliz Konsolosları ve Ermenilerin Katliamı İddiaları, 1878–1914.
- 14. McMeekin, The Russian Origins of the First World War, 144.
- 15. The Armenians' position on the eve of World War I is discussed in detail in my paper entitled "VIII. Taşnak Kongresi: Ermenilerin Karar Anı" in *t. Uluslararası Türk-Ermeni İlişkileri ve Büyük Güçler Sempozyumu, 2–4 Mayıs 2012 Erzurum, Türkiye*, ed. Tolga Başak and Mevlüt Yüksel (Erzurum: Atatürk Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2014). For further discussion of the topic, see Guenter Lewy, *The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey*, 90–91.
- 16. Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler (1915–1920), 2:80.
- 17. Armenian historians estimate that the Armenian soldiers who fought in the Russian armies numbered between 200,000 and 250,000. See Antranig Chalabian, General Andranik and the Armenian Revolutionary Movement (self-published, 1988), 222. See also Hovannisian, Armenia on the Road to Independence, 44, where the number 150,000 is given. The Committee on the Independence of Armenia declared the number of Armenians in the Russian army to be 300,000. Hasan Dilan, Fransız Diplomatik Belgelerinde Ermeni Olaylar 1914–1918/Les évènements Arméniens dans les documents diplomatiques français, 1914–1918, 2390–92.
- 18. Esat Uras, The Armenians in History and the Armenian Question (2nd ed., Istanbul: Documentary Publications, 1988), 841–54. For military correspondence on these desertions, see Zekeriya Özdemir, "I. Dünya Savasında Amele Taburları," 95–99. Morgenthau suggests that the Armenians deserting to Russia numbered only "a few hundred": Henry Morgenthau, Ambassador Morgenthau's Story, 294.

- 19. Askeri Tarih Belgeleri Dergisi, document no. 8, Askeri Tarih ve Stratejik Etüt Başkanlığı/Turkish General Staff Military History Archives, Ankara (hereafter ATASE), Daire Başkanlığı, no. 389, Hour: 8, 12/13.8.330 (October 24/25, 1914), Archive no. 4/3671, cabin no. 160, drawer no. 5, file no. 2818, section no. 59, contents no. 2-43, 2-44, document 2784.
- 20. ATASE, Archive no. 4/3671; cabin no. 160; drawer no. 5; file no. 2818; section no. 59; contents no. 2-23, 2-24.
- For instance, for a list of weapons captured by security forces in the province of Sivas from the Armenians, see Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi/Prime Ministry Ottoman Archive in Istanbul (herefter BOA), DH. ŞFR, 57/146.
- McMeekin, The Russian Origins of the First World War, 154. Ottoman archival documents give very close figures on the number of Armenians that crossed the border and joined the Russian forces.
- Archives Diplomatiques (Ministère des Affaires Etrangères)/Diplomatic Archives (Ministry of Foreign Affairs), Nantes, Série Levant, Arménie, 2:folio 47. See also Chalabian, General Andranik, 222.
- 24. Christopher J. Walker, Armenia, 199.
- Great Britain, National Archives (formerly Public Record Office), Foreign Office Papers (hereafter FO), RG 59, 867.4016/71 (M353, roll 43).
- Pastermajian fled to Erzurum from Istanbul on September 15, 1914. BOA, DH. EUM. 2. Sb, 68/26
- 27. G. Pasdermadjian, Why Armenia Should Be Free, 47.
- 28. Ibid., 50-51.
- For detailed plans of the Allied amphibious operation, see Dilan, Fransız Diplomatik Belgelerinde Ermeni Olayları/Les évènements Arméniens, 15–20.
- 30. Çiçek, The Great War, 55.
- 31. Erickson, "The Armenian Relocations."
- 32. Edward J. Erickson, "Captain Larkin and the Turks," 155.
- 33. Erickson, "The Armenian Relocations," 295.
- 34. Karacakaya, Kaynakçalı Ermeni Meselesi Kronoloji, 112–14.
- 35. The Zeytun district of Maraş was the center of Armenian rebels. Nejla Günay, "Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nda İtilaf Devletleri'nin Osmanlı Ermenileriyle İlişkileri ve 1914/1915 Zeytun İsyanları," Bilig Dergisi 51 (2009): 88–94.
- 36. Ahmed Tetik, ed., Armenian Activities in Archive Documents, 1914–1918, 1:100, 101–2.
- 37. Ibid., 113, 179-80.
- 38. Ibid., 410.
- 39. Ibid., 270.
- 40. Ibid., 117.
- 41. Ibid., 118.
- 42. BOA, HR. SYS, 2762/9/1.
- 43. Tetik, Armenian Activities in Archive Documents, 416.
- 44. Ibid., 106.
- 45. Ibid., 118.
- 46. For the original documents, see Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeni İsyanı 1878–1895, 125.
- 47. ATASE, Archive no. 1/1; cabin no. 9-101; drawer no. 23-1; file no. 4; section no. 23-A; contents no. 5.

- 48. BOA, DH. ŞFR, 50/141.
- 49. Tetik, Armenian Activities, 79.
- 50. BOA, BDH File no. 2811, folder no. 26, vol. 1, 32-33.
- 51. BOA, BDH file no. 401, folder no. 1580, vol. 1, 187-88.
- 52. ATASE, "The decision approved and decreed by the Council of Ministers," Office of Foreign Affairs, Copy of the Decree, May 31, 1915, 326758/270 840.
- 53. Recounted in *OBE*, 161, 163, from Mehmed Münir Bey's report on the reasons for the Armenians' relocation to other regions.
- 54. For my assessment of this issue, see Çiçek, The Great War, 87-88.
- 55. BOA, HR. HU, Kr. 173/5.
- 56. BOA, DH. EUM. 2. Şb, 68/30-1.
- 57. BOA, DH. EUM. 2. Şb, 68/35; DH. ŞFR, 52/93.
- Ergünoz Akçora, "Yaşayanların Dilinden ve Belgelerle Van ve Çevresindeki Ermenilerin Yaptığı Katliamlar."
- 59. McCarthy et al., The Armenian Rebellion at Van, 205.
- 60. Mete Tunçay, Cihat ve Tehcir, 69.
- 61. BOA, BDH, 311/1028/1264, S. 77-78.
- U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C. (hereafter NARA), 867.4016/85, from Oscar S. Hezier to Henry Morgenthau, June 28, 1915.
- 63. Selim Deringil, "In Search of a Way Forward," 66; Vahakn N. Dadrian, "The Secret Young-Turk Ittihadist Conference and the Decision for the World War I Genocide of the Armenians," 189; idem, *German Responsibility in the Armenian Genocide*, 36.
- 64. For a general outline of debate about whether or not an Armenian insurrection occurred, see Lewy, *The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey*, 91–95.
- 65. Ibid., 94. Michael Gwynne Dyer expressed his views on the debate in his article "Turkish 'Falsifiers' and Armenian 'Deceivers," 99.
- 66. Ermeniler Tarafından Yapılan Katliam Belgeleri (1919–1921), 2 vols. (Ankara: T. C. Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü Yayınları, 2011), 1:1054.
- 67. Tetik, Armenian Activities, 61–64, 67–68; see also his other documents about the atrocities committed by Armenians.
- 68. Ibid., 61-69.
- 69. BOA, HR. SYS. 2878/1, reprinted in *Ermeniler Tarafından Yapılan Katliam Belgeleri*, 1:381–82, Belge no. 2.
- 70. BOA, HR. SYS. 2872/2, 21 B. 1334 (24. V. 1916), reprinted in *Ermeniler Tarafından Yapılan Katliam Belgeleri*, 1:437–44, Belge nos. 9–11, 17.
- 71. Ibid., 14–16, 387 (BOA. HR. SYS. 2872/4), Belge nos. 3, 4. 3 Ş. 1334 (5. VI. 1916).
- 72. BOA, HR. SYS. 2877/47, Belge nos. 1-5, 22 L. 1337 (21. VII. 1919).
- 73. BOA, HR. SYS. 2872/2, Belge nos. 117-23.
- 74. BOA, 5 March 331 (March 18, 1915) Signature, archive no. 4/3671; cabin no. 160; drawer no. 5; file no. 2818; section no. 59; contents nos. 1–12.
- 75. Alpay Kabacalı, ed., Talat Paşa'nın Anıları, 67-68.
- 76. Erickson, "The Armenian Relocations," 297.
- 77. Ibid., 293. See further David F. Trask, The War with Spain in 1898; Brian McAllister Linn, The U.S. Army and Counterinsurgency in the Philippine War, 1899–1902; and S. B. Spies, Methods of Barbarism?

Modern Counterinsurgency Doctrine and the Ottoman-Armenian Population Reconcentrations of 1915–1916

John Reed

The twentieth century was an age of involuntary population transfer. Sovereign states relocated national, ethnic, or religious communities within their borders for numerous reasons, defended by a variety of justifications, with various intended and unintended outcomes. Forced population movements were caused by the interaction of multiple long-term historical forces: majority nationalism, demands for ethnic self-determination, and fears of national fragmentation, triggered by contingent events, typically the outbreak of war between multiethnic sovereign states. A "reconcentration" is a population transfer employed by an incumbent government to defeat an insurgency: an internal armed threat to its existence or its territorial integrity. Population transfers intended as "demographic engineering" are ordered by governing elites to create more homogeneous national populations or "peoples."

The Ottoman Committee for Union and Progress (CUP) initiated the Armenian deportations of 1915–1916 as a wartime counterinsurgency measure in the context of Allied offensives at multiple points around the empire's perimeter, most critically a Russian offensive along the Ottoman-Russian frontier in the East. These relocations, however, had the effect of completing a demographic transformation of eastern Anatolia, which had begun with an influx of Muslim refugees ejected from majority-Christian Balkan nations after the 1912–13 Balkan Wars. I am aware of the academic controversy surrounding the events of 1915–16. For the purposes of this chapter I assume that the triumvirate within the CUP *authentically believed* that it was faced with a Russian-supported Armenian insurgency in 1915 and adopted reconcentration as a feasible and suitable solution to an

immediate problem. I do not take a position on whether the subsequent mass mortality among noncombatants constituted "genocide," either juristically or within the popular understanding of the term. Instead I apply elements of current U.S. counterinsurgency (COIN) doctrine to insights contained in recent studies of the Armenian deportations to suggest why the Ottoman state was unable to conduct them at a lower level of mortality. The central argument of this chapter is that COIN reconcentrations and population transfers to achieve demographic homogeneity are incompatible in execution: while counterinsurgency requires an economy of violence, population transfers motivated by postconflict demographic goals lack an internal restraining logic. They thus usually terminate in operational failure, delegitimizing noncombatant casualties or long-term ethnic grievances.

COUNTERINSURGENCY BROADLY UNDERSTOOD

Counterinsurgency is a form of state violence in which a constituted government opposes a protracted armed internal challenge to its sovereignty. The center of gravity in counterinsurgency is that portion of the civilian population over which the state must reassert control in order to deny the insurgency recruits, resources, and intelligence. Counterinsurgency is fundamentally different from maneuver warfare, in which operational commanders choreograph the combat arms to achieve strategic war aims through decisive tactical victories. The terrain on which maneuver warfare unfolds is just that: the surface of the earth on which the armies collide. The intensity of maneuver warfare and the violence that it visits on soldiers and noncombatants are limited by international agreements derived from Just War doctrines.

In counterinsurgency the state, which may be assisted by an external patron, confronts a threat within its territory mounted by elements of its own population, which may also receive external support. Insurgents are motivated by various combinations of ideology, communal beliefs, and historical narratives. Ethnic insurgent movements can be rooted in nostalgia for an imagined ideal past and/or a belief that an authentic future life can only be achieved through armed secession and the creation of a new, sovereign, homogeneous state. In some instances a minority secessionist movement may initiate violence to trigger governmental reprisals sufficient to justify the intervention of an outside power hostile to the government. The terrain of counterinsurgency is the human population

that the insurgent seeks to dominate and the government seeks to secure from insurgent subversion and control. Insurgencies can generate high levels of what appears to be indiscriminate violence. Before 1949 the Westphalian bias toward the inviolability of the unitary sovereign state delayed the emergence of international law governing counterinsurgency. The Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907, moreover, did not address security-related population transfers within sovereign states during insurgencies. Success in counterinsurgency, however, has historically most often accrued to the opponent best able to practice an economy of selective violence during a protracted struggle.

RECONCENTRATION DURING INSURGENCIES

Many historians are aware of COIN campaigns in which reconcentration occurred, without necessarily understanding its actual role in each conflict. It may have had a positive though not decisive impact because of its late introduction into a struggle already ending (Philippine-American War, Greek Civil War, Hukbalahap Insurgency) or been a major determinant of success because of its early integration into a campaign plan with adequate administrative support under a rule of law, however harsh (Malayan Emergency and Kenyan Emergency). Conversely, it may have helped prolong a stalemate until other factors determined the struggle's outcome (Algeria, Portuguese Angola, and Mozambique), been a total failure accelerating the government's defeat (Cuba, 1895–98), or been abandoned and succeeded by a different counterinsurgency approach (South Vietnam, 1961-63). Historians should avoid making a simple equation: reconcentration employed + counterinsurgent success = reconcentration decisive. Instead each COIN campaign should be examined on its own merits to avoid imposing causal factors "alien to its nature."

THE DOCTRINAL RENAISSANCE OF 2006

The following principles of counterinsurgency were derived from lessons learned by the British in Malaya, the French in Algeria, and the United States in South Vietnam. Distilled from the works of David Galula and Roger Trinquier (Algeria), and Sir Robert Thompson (Malaya), they were codified in and disseminated by U.S Army Field Manual FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, published on December 15, 2006, which guided the revised campaign plan executed by the Multi-National Force-Iraq of Gen. David Petraeus during the "surge" of 2007–8.

- I. The state's primary objective is the defense or reestablishment of a politically and economically viable nation with a reasonably effective and honest central administration to forestall future insurgencies. Maintenance of governmental legitimacy is the primary task in counterinsurgency; all elements of national power must be directed toward that objective.⁸
- 2. Counterinsurgents must be willing to mount and sustain *protracted efforts*; populations being protected from insurgent coercion and brought back under government control must be confident of the government's long-term commitment to their physical defense and their future social and economic well-being.⁹
- 3. No insurgency can be defeated without a political solution to the popular grievances from which it draws its strength: *political factors are paramount*; military tasks are secondary.¹⁰
- 4. Insurgents must be isolated from the larger population and their cause delegitimized; the government must establish population security within a *rule of law* as it existed before the insurgency emerged.¹¹
- 5. Unity of effort is essential among all military, paramilitary, and civil organizations and all echelons of military command: all military and civil functions that bear on the dismantling of the insurgency and the elimination of its causes must be integrated into a *single* effort.¹²
- 6. The government must secure its "base areas" (districts that the insurgency has not yet penetrated) before shifting to "clear and hold" operations in insurgent strongholds. Military and paramilitary forces must turn cleared districts over to previously existing local police forces immediately upon pacification, to avoid insurgent repenetration.¹³
- 7. "Kinetic" or force-oriented military counterinsurgency missions must only be executed on the basis of timely, specific, and reliable intelligence. Commanders must never authorize more than a minimum level of force within civilian communities.¹⁴
- 8. Commanders must reward subordinates' initiative by decentralizing decision-making authority to the lowest possible echelon in contact with insurgents and the local population.¹⁵

Conspicuously missing from these principles is the central concept of maneuver warfare: the "decision." Decisive victories that reset the conflict's political calculus have been uncommon during recent counterinsurgencies. Very long struggles are the rule: the party that can best exploit protraction generally achieves success through the exhaustion of its opponent. Either the insurgency collapses from a gradual loss of popular

support and a refusal of the government to commit indiscriminate violence (Hukbalahap Insurgency, Malaya) or the government decides that, notwithstanding its operational and tactical successes, it has arrived at a strategic juncture where a liquidation of the struggle on the insurgency's terms is less costly than its indefinite continuation (French Indo-China, Algeria, Portuguese Africa, Vietnam). Last-resort population transfers as defensive measures are permitted under the Fourth Geneva Convention Relative to the Treatment of Civilians in Time of War (1949). However, manual FM 3-24 contains not a single reference to reconcentration: the population is to be secured in place or "screwed down," a phrase employed during the Malayan Emergency. In effect the doctrinal renaissance of 2006 delegitimized population transfers as a COIN technique.

The reader might detect tension between principles 5 and 8 above: the requirement for "unity of effort" and the need to encourage initiative in subordinate commanders at the local level, which requires having no motivational dissonance between the highest and lowest echelons of military and paramilitary command. While this might seem impossible before the age of centralized officer education and electronic communication, it was in fact achieved during the U.S. COIN campaign in the Philippines during 1899–1902, via wide dissemination of a basic doctrinal publication (General Orders 100, series of 1863, reissued in 1898). The CUP's failure to impose command discipline over its forces in eastern Anatolia appears to have played a major role in its loss of agency over the outcome of the Armenian deportations.

BACKGROUND TO THE SITUATION IN EASTERN ANATOLIA, 1915–16

The multiple treaties that followed the collapse of the Central Powers in 1918 created what Eric D. Weitz refers to as the "Paris System": a consensus on the normative ethnically homogeneous nature of the sovereign nation-state. This completed a transformation of the basic framework for international relations from the 1815 Congress of Vienna's "multi-ethnic and multi-confessional societies," in which "diversity under the state was an accepted fact of life" (the age of the "great land empires") to a spectrum of smaller, modernized, more ethnically homogeneous states, each constituting a single "nation." Lord Curzon referred to this as the "unmixing of peoples." Virtually every event in the external history of the Ottoman Empire from the 1830 London Protocol (which recognized

Greek independence) to the outbreak of World War I marked a milepost toward the Paris System, which recognized large-scale population transfers across new borders as a necessary concomitant of the emergence of new nations. ¹⁸ The Ottoman Empire was frequently on the receiving end of forced population transfers: both older and newer European powers expelled Islamic populations from the Balkans and Caucasus on numerous occasions throughout the nineteenth century. ¹⁹ This process further accelerated after 1878, simultaneously truncating the Ottoman Empire and motivating a Turkish-Muslim national renaissance after the 1912–13 Balkan Wars. Unfortunately, while "peoples" collectively began to acquire rights (and, conversely, liabilities, depending upon where they resided), individual human beings did not. The individuals' fate during conditions of national emergency, even the fate of noncombatants, became enslaved to their perceived ethnic identity, dooming multiple minority populations between 1915 and the present. ²⁰

The Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78 and the subsequent Treaties of San Stefano and Berlin mark the point at which the conventional narrative of Ottoman history accelerates the arc of the empire's decline toward its final collapse. This is usually explained in terms of a failure to "modernize" or a failure to embrace European administrative institutions (to "Westernize").21 While the question of internal Ottoman modernization is outside the scope of this chapter, the military threat posed by Christian European states progressively reduced the Ottoman sultanate's sovereignty within the empire in two main areas: control over external finances and debt service and governance over Christian minorities living within the empire's boundaries in the Balkans and eastern Anatolia. The sultanate made numerous concessions to dilute pressure from Britain, France, and Russia, terminating in the February 1914 Armenian Reforms, which were prevented from establishing another temporary equilibrium in Ottoman-Armenian relations by the outbreak of war with the Allies in November of that year.²²

In 1908 the Young Turks deposed the last Ottoman sultan and began to steer the empire away from its previous emphasis on managing non-Muslim minorities with selective grants of partial autonomy and toward the creation of a single Islamic, Turkish identity.²³ Meanwhile, between 1880 and 1911, the empire experienced a series of nationalist insurrections against its authority in its remaining western, eastern, and southern frontier provinces, against which it generally mounted "kinetic" COIN operations.²⁴ These employed light infantry units aggressively

led to pursue insurgent bands to exhaustion and destruction, along with harsh localized reprisals against specific communities believed to have supported insurgents: what Donald Bloxham refers to as "culls." The best example of a kinetic Ottoman COIN campaign was the one that successfully suppressed Bulgarian sponsored 1903–8 Macedonian insurrection. At the same time the empire had to preclude further interventions from European Great Powers, while containing threats from Serbia and Bulgaria (former Ottoman provinces that had established small but well-armed national armies). This forced the CUP to prioritize defense against the Western threat over its far eastern frontier with Russia far ahead of its peacetime internal security mission in Anatolia, which merged with the external Russian threat soon after the outbreak of war. ²⁷

Edward Erickson analyzed the Ottoman internal security order of battle in 1914 and concluded that the empire was so strained by its confrontation with multiple threats around its perimeter that no regular military or paramilitary gendarmerie units were available for either the security of its lines of communication to its northeastern Caucasus front or the Armenian deportation task in early 1915. As a result the only available COIN troop basis consisted of remobilized tribal cavalrymen (the Hamidiye tribal cavalry and the successor Light Cavalry Corps having been dissolved into the regular establishment or discharged by November 1914) or paramilitary volunteers: Muslim *muhacirler* refugees from the Balkans and the Caucasus relocated in Anatolia.²⁹

Within the empire opposed nationalisms increased the likelihood that the Armenian removal task, even if initiated on national security grounds, would degenerate into high levels of violence against innocents. At the communal level a romantic imagining of the sublime relationship between the individual and the community in which all "peoples" live in their own sovereign nation-state with all other members of their ethnic group spread among both ethnic minorities in the provinces and emerging leadership cadres in the Ottoman metropolis. Thus the desire of educated Armenians for an autonomous region within the empire or, even better, complete independence was paralleled by an equally passionate desire among the leaders of the CUP for a "Turkish" Anatolia retaining the six eastern provinces abutting Russia in which Armenians constituted a sizable minority. Carl von Clausewitz speaks of "polarity": the interaction between opposed courses of action that may slow operations in the field and nudge a conflict away from or in alternate circumstances toward a state of absolute, "ideal" violence. 30 What Bloxham has described as a dialectical relationship between mutually exclusive manifestations of national feeling (Ottoman and Armenian) was a critical determinant of the massive Armenian mortality of 1915.³¹

RECONCENTRATION IN THE PHILIPPINES, MALAYA, AND VIETNAM

Population reconcentration efforts in three twentieth-century COIN struggles can help clarify the outcome of the Ottoman-Armenian removals of 1915–16: the Philippine-American War of 1899–1902, the Malayan Emergency of 1948–60, and the Vietnam War before 1963. These campaigns illustrate the importance of (1) discipline over and operational control of counterinsurgent forces in contact with civilian populations thought to be supportive of the insurgency and (2) the need to prevent additional or alternate national goals from infiltrating the COIN effort (which, in the modern understanding, should be aimed solely at incentivizing specific populations to abandon support for the insurgency supposedly waged on their behalf).

Reconcentration appeared late in the Philippine War, between late 1901 and spring 1902, when fourteen of eighteen provinces throughout the archipelago had already been turned over to civilian rule under the Philippine Commission. The academic discussion of reconcentration is usually conflated with the question of brutal interrogation techniques (the "water cure"), illegal violence committed by officers in the field that generated subsequent courts-martial, and mortality associated with the cholera and rinderpest epidemics of 1903. At the time, however, reconcentration was understood by its primary practitioner, General J. Franklin Bell, to be a temporary measure to be reversed as soon as the insurgent commander in Southern Luzon's Batangas Province, Miguel Malvar, surrendered. Glenn A. May's study of the insurrection in Batangas describes the concentration of Filipino villagers within local "protected zones" that materially hastened the collapse of an insurgency already weakening but that also, inadvertently, increased civilian mortality from malaria and measles. Villagers were required to relocate themselves under their own local leaders and were permitted to return to their homes in roughly four months.³² Brian Linn found a similar process on the Visayan island of Samar.³³ Although other scholars have spoken of these measures as a policy of "chastisement," the geographical and temporal limitation of the concentrations in Southern Luzon and Samar argues that they were not intended as collective punishment of villagers for previously supporting the insurgency but as a short-termed disincentive for any *further* support to the insurgency. At the time this was cast as a measure protecting Filipinos, in effect, from themselves.

In a bibliographic essay published in 1999 Karl Hack identified the primary reasons for the success of the British New Villages program in "screwing down" the ethnic Chinese jungle-fringe squatter population in Malaya, which had served as the logistical support base for the Communist Malayan National Liberation Army (MNLA). This initiative, which ultimately involved 350,000 squatters and 600,000 rubber plantation and tin mine workers, reduced the MNLA's food supply, thus breaking it down into smaller and smaller armed bands. 34 While medical and sanitation services in the New Villages were sufficient to prevent elevated mortality from disease, the villages themselves contained no more than rudimentary amenities. What Hack describes as a program of "massive control and intimidation" succeeded because "British traditions of 'minimum force" prevented coercion from "spiraling into self-defeating oppression." As the Malayan Emergency wore on during the late 1950s, two developments combined to defeat the MNLA. First, an increasing number of Communist defectors chose to join the British-Malaysian security forces in the pursuit of their former comrades. Second, the Englishspeaking Straits Chinese community in Malaya, which had earlier been extremely vulnerable to Communist terrorism, embraced the moderate, collaborationist Malayan Chinese Association, which supported the British path to decolonization. In the long term ethnic Chinese were coopted into the postcolonial administration formed by the British, while many of the New Villages took root and became established agricultural communities.35

The Strategic Hamlet Program in the Republic of Vietnam, launched by President Ngo Dinh Diem in 1961, provides an example of population concentration during an insurgency that did not result in elevated mortality but utterly failed to prevent the mobilization of rural peasants by the Communist National Liberation Front (NLF). Diem, who possessed a vision of modernity for southeast Asia ("Personalism") that rejected both U.S. neo-colonialism and Communist collectivism, prioritized the quasi-mystical goal of creating a "popular, autonomous, and representative democracy" in the countryside above the more prosaic tasks necessary to roll back the Communist infrastructure. The program was handicapped from its inception by an overambitious and underresourced construction schedule that imposed irresistible pressures on local officials to extract escalating tax and labor contributions from the target population, which played directly into the hands of local NLF

cadres, who were able to advance their collectivist program with temporary appeals to the economic self-interest of peasant heads-of-household. The irony is that both Diem and the Communists, from different ideological perspectives, were bent on "revitalizing a supposedly pre-existing communal solidarity among peasants that was not, in fact, characteristic of the South's rural population." As in so many other aspects of the Second Indochina War, the opponent whose delusions were slightly better aligned with reality achieved the greater degree of success.

Reconcentration was employed in each of these struggles, but with very different consequences. The Philippine protected zones were localized, brief, and largely organized by indigenous leaders within the affected population itself. The concentrations *unintentionally* resulted in uneven food distribution and consequent elevated disease mortality, which merged with the subsequent cholera epidemic of 1902–3. Although the Malayan New Villages concentrated a single ethnic group, Chinese squatters, in austere but barely adequate conditions, it ultimately served as a mechanism for partially integrating that population into a postinsurgency, independent Malaya. The Strategic Hamlet program's two goals were mutually exclusive within existing resource constraints. Its fuzzy ideological function (to effect a "third way" transformation of the relationship between individuals) was entirely external to the concrete needs of a postcolonial state faced with a Communist insurgency.

ANALYSIS

Unlike the Philippines or Malaya, the Armenian deportations took place in the context of a Great Power war in which an ethnic population within a sovereign state was viewed, correctly, as actively supporting the external threat. Assuming that the CUP initially conceived the Armenian deportations as an internal security measure, modern COIN doctrine can help us identify several factors that prevented the deportations from being executed at a lower level of violence and lethality among noncombatants.

1. The CUP was biased toward immediate action, either as an example to other restive Ottoman minorities or to deprive Russia of a force multiplier in any future offensive into eastern Anatolia. Previous rebellions in the Balkans were also suppressed as rapidly as possible to forestall European diplomatic pressure.³⁷ This prevented the CUP from entertaining a longer-term solution with, perhaps, a more selective "culling" of Armenian males in specific frontier communities

- with a history of protracted resistance to Ottoman authority, as had occurred earlier in the century.³⁸
- 2. The CUP was a besieged leadership cadre attempting "at all costs" to preserve a sovereign state containing as much former Ottoman territory as possible during a period of severe military reverses.³⁹ This prevented it from entertaining anything remotely like a political solution, such as a reinforcement of the reforms of 1914, which were voided after the empire's entry into the war allied with the Central Powers.
- 3. The lack of sufficient military and paramilitary assets available to the CUP meant that a population security campaign to suppress the insurgency on its home ground, using a stack of interlocking military and police forces, was beyond the capacities of the Ottoman state. As these COIN organizations did not exist, deportation away from threatened provinces in eastern Anatolia using whatever "loyal" personnel were available appeared to be the only remaining option. 40
- 4. Thus the only forces available to execute the deportation mission were former members of the demobilized Tribal Cavalry regiments, along with Islamic refugees (from Christian ethnic cleansing in the Balkans) relocated in eastern Anatolia. These individuals during peacetime would have required stern discipline in their interactions with Armenians; in the maelstrom of war whatever safeguards the CUP placed on the deportation process or intended to place or later regretted not placing were overwhelmed.

CONCLUSION

Donald Bloxham and Eric Weitz have argued, and Edward Erickson has explicitly conceded, that the logic of demographic engineering may have partially motivated the Armenian removals of 1915–16.⁴² Erickson refers to Enver Paşa's instructions of May 2, 1915: "these directives did not order the extermination of the Armenians but they do indicate the existence of a policy of population engineering [my emphasis] that has a range of interpretations from simple relocations to ethnic cleansing." An analogy suggests itself: the late nineteenth century economic principle of Gresham's Law, in which nations that used two different monetary metals would inevitably see the baser or lower-valued metal (usually silver) drive the higher-valued metal (gold) out of circulation for everyday transactions. In the context of a struggle that the CUP authentically viewed as an existential threat to the empire during a period in which regional resistance

to central authority was emerging, the baser motivation—the creation of an ethnically homogeneous Turkish Anatolia—fatally skewed the CUP's operational attempt to reimpose Ottoman authority over a recalcitrant and perhaps ultimately unreconcilable subject population within the six eastern frontier provinces. Disaster ensued.⁴⁴

Another factor that Bloxham and Erickson discuss, from different perspectives, concerns the consequences of armed actions conducted by Armenian national resistance committees. Before 1915 they were insufficient to goad Ottoman authorities into another round of large-scale reprisals but more than sufficient to convince the leadership of the CUP that the entire Armenian community was collectively responsible for separatist violence after the initial Russian offensive. 45 According to Bloxham, these committees, no less than the CUP, were functioning within a "Darwinian international system" in which greatness would only come to existing nations and new nations only to those minorities strong enough to seize their desired future through violence. Not strong enough to do so without the assistance of a traditional enemy of the Ottoman state, the committees mistook Russian willingness to arm Armenian clients for a larger commitment to midwife an autonomous Armenia, which Russian authorities had no intention of doing.46 The committees thus played a weak hand extremely poorly, thus contributing to their destruction and the ethnic cleansing of their client population.⁴⁷

Finally, the lurch from crisis to crisis in the Ottoman war effort during 1915 was marked by multiple resource-driven opportunity-cost decisions at different threatened points around the empire's perimeter. Its conventional maneuver forces were committed against Russian and Allied forces in far eastern Anatolia and the Dardanelles. So the CUP was forced to rely on paramilitary units composed of individuals implacably hostile to Armenians (ex–tribal cavalrymen and Muslim refugees from lost European provinces relocated to the Anatolian interior) for the convoy "escort" mission. This, combined with the emerging general logic of national ethnic homogeneity, ensured that the CUP would have little or no control over the outcome of the deportation process, which had claimed the lives of over 800,000 noncombatants by spring 1916.

NOTES

- 1. Joseph Schechla, "Ideological Roots of Population Transfer," 239-40.
- While the contemporary term "ethnic cleansing" is often used to describe local initiatives, the term "demographic engineering" is best reserved to describe actions ordered at the highest leadership levels of a sovereign state.

- 3. The 1648 Treaty of Westphalia, concluded at the end of the Thirty Years War in Europe, is generally cited as the point at which the unitary sovereign nation-state, monopolizing violence within its geographic borders, became the basic unit of international relations, conflict, and legal theory. In this model sovereign states are generally biased against intervention in the internal order of other formally coequal states, including the suppression of "ethnic rebellions" that today would be understood as "insurgencies."
- 4. The Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907 were primarily concerned with the "laws and usages of war" on land, naval warfare, the rights of neutral nations and neutral individuals within warring states, definitions and rights of prisoners of war, and the amelioration of suffering for the wounded, including the banning of explosive small-arms ammunition. International law did not programmatically expand to encompass protections of citizens within sovereign states in what are now termed "insurgencies" until the Geneva Convention of August 1949.
- 5. Schechla, "Ideological Roots of Population Transfer," 263.
- 6. For a discussion of the distinction between selective and indiscriminate violence and the various factors that drive opponents during insurgencies toward one pole or the other, see Stathis Kalyvas, "The Paradox of Terrorism in Civil War."
- 7. Karl von Clausewitz, On War, 88.
- 8. U.S. Army-Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual, 6, 37–39, 42–43, 197.
- 9. Ibid., 41, 43-44.
- 10. Ibid., 5-6, 39-40.
- 11. Ibid., 2, 42-43, 180-81, 208, 231-33.
- 12. Ibid., 39.
- 13. Ibid., 174-80.
- 14. Ibid., 41, 45-46.
- 15. Ibid., 46-47.
- 16. Schechla, "Ideological Roots of Population Transfer," 263–64.
- 17. Eric Weitz, "From Vienna to the Paris System," 1314–15, 1326.
- 18. Ibid., 1319, 1322-23.
- 19. See Mark Mazower, "Half-Infidels" [review of Bruce Clark's *Twice a Stranger:* How Mass Expulsion Forged Modern Greece and Turkey], London Review of Books, August 3, 2006, 9–10.
- 20. Weitz, "From Vienna to the Paris System," 1314, 1321, 1326.
- For a critique of this traditional view, see Frederick Anscombe, "Conclusion," 540-43, 556.
- 22. Roderic H. Davison, "The Armenian Crisis, 1912–1914"; Donald Bloxham, "The Armenian Genocide of 1915–1916," 150–51.
- 23. Schechla, "Ideological Roots of Population Transfer," 245.
- Edward J. Erickson, "The Armenian Relocations and Ottoman National Security,"
 294.
- 25. Bloxham, "The Armenian Genocide of 1915–1916," 149.
- 26. Edward J. Erickson, "Template for Destruction," 358-60, 365-67.
- 27. Ibid., 352.
- 28. Edward J. Erickson, "The Armenians and Ottoman Military Policy, 1915," 145–50, 156–60.

- 29. Erickson, "The Armenian Relocations and Ottoman National Security," 296.
- 30. Clausewitz, On War, 77-78, 83-84.
- 31. Bloxham, "The Armenian Genocide of 1915–1916," 173.
- 32. Glenn A. May, *Battle for Batangas: A Philippine Province at War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), 248–54, 262–67.
- 33. Brian McAllister Linn. *The Philippine War*, 1899–1902 (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2000), 306–21.
- 34. Karl Hack, "Iron Claws on Malaya," 104-5, 119, 124.
- 35. Ibid., 123-24, 122, 110.
- 36. Philip Catton, "Counter-Insurgency and Nation Building," 919, 936, 938–39 (quotation).
- 37. Erickson, "Template for Destruction," 364.
- 38. Bloxham, "The Armenian Genocide of 1915–1916," 149–51.
- 39. Nader Sohrabi, "Global Waves, Local Actors," 72 (quotation); Bloxham, "The Armenian Genocide of 1915–1916," 152–53.
- 40. Although military incapacity to execute a mission assigned by the state is a valid analytic explanation for failure, it remains the case that no state should bite off more than it can chew with the forces at its disposal, whether we are examining the Armenian deportations or the American counterinsurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan.
- 41. Bloxham, "The Armenian Genocide of 1915–1916," 148; Erickson, "The Armenians and Ottoman Military Policy, 1915," 142, 164; idem, "Armenian Massacres," 73; idem, "Template for Destruction," 370, 376; idem, "The Armenian Relocations and Ottoman National Security," 297.
- 42. Bloxham, "The Armenian Genocide of 1915–1916," 146, 183; Weitz, "From Vienna to the Paris System," 1323; Erickson, "The Armenians and Ottoman Military Policy, 1915," 142, 164.
- 43. Erickson, "The Armenians and Ottoman Military Policy, 1915," 164.
- 44. Bloxham, "The Armenian Genocide of 1915–1916," 188. See also Hilmar Kaiser, "Regional Resistance to Central Government Policies." Kaiser argues that regional variations in reconcentration outcomes prove the nonexistence of an overall genocide plan emanating from the highest ranks of the CUP. But his findings are also consistent with the observation that in the political-military environment of 1915 the CUP was unable to impose a less lethal, *uniform* population transfer effort on its civil and military subordinates.
- 45. Erickson, "Template for Destruction," 360–61, 367, 370; Bloxham, "The Armenian Genocide of 1915–1916," 154.
- 46. Bloxham, "The Armenian Genocide of 1915–1916," 150, 183–86 (quotation on 185), 159.
- 47. Edward Erickson produced a local study of Ottoman COIN operations on the Mediterranean Sea near İskenderun emphasizing Ottoman fears of an Armenian insurgent-Allied linkup, which terminated in what Erickson refers to as "ethnic cleansing": Edward J. Erickson, "Bayonets on Musa Dagh," 543.
- 48. Erickson, "Template for Destruction," 364.
- 49. Schechla, "Ideological Roots of Population Transfer," 246. Per Bloxham the figure is 1 million: "The Armenian Genocide of 1915–1916," 141.

The Relations between the Ottoman State and the Armenian Patriarchate in Istanbul (1914–1918)

Ramazan Erhan Güllü

The Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul, which is generally considered to have been established in 1461, has functioned as an administrative and political center of the Armenian millet due to its proximity to the capital of the Ottoman state, even though it was not at the top of the religious hierarchy within the Armenian religious administration. The Etchmiadzin catholicos, known as the supreme patriarch and catholicos of all Armenians, had superior ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the members of the Armenian Apostolic Church. The Patriarchate of Istanbul was fifth in the spiritual ranking of the Armenian churches, coming after Etchmiadzin, Ahtamar, Sis, and Jerusalem, respectively. Yet due to its representative role the Istanbul patriarchate functioned throughout the rule of the Ottoman state as the political headquarters of the Armenian millet under the spiritual authority of the Catholicosate of Etchmiadzin. The Istanbul Patriarchate enjoyed the legal privileges that were granted by the Ottoman government, and its religious and civil administrative units constantly functioned until the demise of the state.

The Armenian Millet Nizamnamesi (charter) of 1863, and the subsequent foundation of the Armenian General Assembly (Meclis-i Umumi), gave a certain autonomy to members of the Armenian millet in governing their internal affairs. Ever since its introduction the autonomous status of the Armenian millet had caused fierce and heated controversies involving the Ottoman bureaucrats and the Unionists who were at the helm of the state during World War I. In the face of the Armenian autonomy in the administration of their internal affairs, the Committee of Union and Progress enacted constitutional amendments during World War I to

repeal the regulations that functioned as the basis of the privileges of the Armenian community and thus attempted to reconfigure the administrative structure of the Armenian millet. This chapter examines the new Nizamname that was enacted by the Ottoman government during World War I in an effort to change the administrative structure of the Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul. Analysis of these changes undertaken by the CUP cadres in regard to the religious institutions in the Ottoman Empire also sheds light on the CUP's mentality in dealing with various minority groups. What lay at the heart of the CUP's policies toward the Armenian Patriarchate was concern over the privileges granted to the patriarchate in earlier decades. In general terms the CUP did not look favorably upon such extensive rights and authority embedded in the millet system, which functioned independently of the general state authority. Before World War I the CUP's policies attempted to abolish these privileges, which continued uninterrupted during the war. "The governance of Muslims and Christians under separate jurisdictions, even though they enjoyed the same citizenship, was interpreted by the CUP as an out-ofdate policy." These policies were not a mere breach of the general notion of equality regardless of creed and language. The patriarchate that came to represent these privileges developed as a political center. The CUP's desire to reconfigure the institutions that enjoyed these long-held privileges became clearer after 1913. The measures that the CUP cadres spearheaded during World War I tried to abolish these privileges and instead introduce total equality across the Ottoman society.

THE ATTITUDE OF THE CUP TOWARD THE ISTANBUL PATRIARCHATE

Two fundamental issues shaped the Ottoman government's attitude toward the Istanbul Patriarchate of the Armenian millet before World War I. First, the CUP had reservations about the influence of contentious political organizations in the decision-making processes of the patriarchate, derived from the privileges granted to the Armenian millet since the early nineteenth century. Second, the CUP identified an intimate relationship between the Istanbul Patriarchate and the Catholicosate of Etchmiadzin, which was located within the territories of the Ottomans' greatest rival, tsarist Russia. The Ottoman government came to recognize that the Istanbul Patriarchate was not only in dialogue with Armenian political organizations but was actually serving the political interests of these organizations. The Ottomans found that the religious institution

of the patriarchate had become politicized and that the patriarchs were in practice agents of the Armenian political agenda. The Ottoman government also sought to limit the Etchmiadzin Catholicosate's influence on the Armenian millet and hence to contain the Russian influence. The suspicions cultivated among the Ottoman ruling elite toward the Etchmiadzin Catholicosate were indeed confirmed by its political alliance with Russia during World War I, but its political stance was visible even before the war, when it played a role in triggering public unrest among the Armenian community.

In the midst of the political maneuverings that set the stage for World War I. Catholicos Gevork V met with the Russian tsar Nicholas II and stated that "the emancipation of the Ottoman Armenians is only possible if an Armenian state is established under the tutelage of tsarist Russia."3 In other words the institution that had long functioned as the highest religious authority in the Armenian community explicitly declared its pro-Russian stance on the eve of World War I. In this regard tsarist Russia ensured Armenian support in the possible Russian schemes of invasion of eastern Anatolia. Russia would have leverage to trigger the Armenian rebellions against the Ottoman authorities in the region.⁴ In the meantime the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnaktsutyun) started mobilizing the Armenian communities in eastern Anatolia and recruited Armenians into voluntary units to fight alongside the Russian army against the Ottoman forces. Thus it was a matter of course that the supporters of the ARF would welcome the outbreak of the war with much excitement and anticipation.⁵

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE ARMENIAN PATRIARCHATE OF ISTANBUL AND THE CATHOLICOSATE OF ETCHMIADZIN

According to the Ottoman ruling elite, the Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul was absolutely in support of the collaboration between the Catholicosate of Etchmiadzin and the Russian army. Some of the patriarchate's correspondence that was intercepted reinforced this dominant belief. For instance, it became clear that the correspondence between the patriarchate and the catholicosate, often forwarded via embassies in Istanbul, had coded segments that provided information to the Russian side.⁶ Furthermore, the Armenian komitadjis increased their reach over the Armenian churches across Anatolia: Armenian priests who did not

support the komitadjis were removed from their posts. Such activities began to turn the general Armenian population against the Ottoman state.⁷ In addition the Ottoman government took notice of such collaborations and grew concerned by the mobilizations. The religious institutions acted in ways similar to the Armenian revolutionary committees that joined forces with the Russian army.⁸

Be that as it may, the Armenian patriarch of Istanbul, Zaven Efendi, stated quite the opposite. He claimed that the patriarchate gave utmost importance to preventing the recruitment of Armenians into the Russian army. But the Ottoman government remained unconvinced. The CUP elite perceived the Armenian threat as mainly being derived from the demands of the Armenian communities to enact political reforms in eastern Anatolia under the tutelage of the major European powers. The CUP government gradually came to view the Armenian millet as the main inspiration for persistent antigovernment activities and therefore concluded that the Armenians would side with the Russians once war broke out.⁹

Patriarch Zaven Efendi distinguished between Russian and Ottoman Armenians, arguing that it was the former and not the latter who sought to fight against the Ottoman government before and during World War I. It was his intention to assure the Ottoman government that the Armenian communities, and especially the Istanbul Patriarchate, were well aware of the possible repercussions of allying with tsarist Russia. To this end the patriarch assigned special envoys to Tbilisi and Etchmiadzin to convey his concerns about the possible detrimental effects of the separatist movements.¹⁰

By that point, however, the patriarch's credibility level among government officials had fallen. The CUP government could no longer put trust in his statements. Moreover, the Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul was regarded as a disloyal entity that allied with the Russian Armenians and the Armenian revolutionary committees. The top Ottoman leaders—Enver Paşa, Cemal Paşa, and Talat Paşa—also accused the patriarch of mobilizing separatist movements against the Ottoman government. Cemal Paşa, who was one of the vocal critics of the patriarchate, stated that "Zaven Efendi's policies are always detrimental to the Turks." 11

According to multiple eyewitness accounts of the era, the war minister of the CUP government, Enver Paşa, summoned Zaven Efendi to share his concerns in light of the state documents about the Armenian attacks on Ottoman villages and the murders of Ottoman police officers in

eastern Anatolia. Enver Paşa asked the patriarch to contain the Armenian rebellions and to ensure the absolute loyalty of the Armenian community to the state. He explicitly informed the patriarch that military intervention would be inevitable if the rebellious activities continued to spread. Zaven Efendi repudiated the allegations, stating that those rebellious elements were organized by the Russian Armenians. He then committed to attaining the absolute loyalty of the Armenian community to the Ottoman government. ¹²

The reality on the ground, however, proved that the patriarch was out of touch or insincere. The CUP government took notice of clear instances in which Armenian clerks, who were assigned by the patriarchate, were involved in antigovernment rebellions. In one instance, Sogomon Akkelyan, who was relocated to Tripolitania because of his role in triggering the rebellions in the Urfa province in 1895, was reinstated in Urfa by the patriarchate immediately after he was released by the Ottoman government, thanks to the restoration of the constitution in 1908. Akkelyan, who was once allegedly involved with antagonistic separatist movements, again triggered public unrest in Urfa in 1915. 13 The minister of the interior, Talat Paşa, was also critical of the incidents that took place in Urfa: "rebellious movements launched in Urfa were an indicator that the Urfa province was selected as the epicenter of the separatist Armenian struggles." 14 The Armenian rebellions that erupted in Urfa, Zeytun, Bitlis, and Van and the subsequent Russian takeover in Van as a result of the Armenian surrender compelled the CUP government to pass the controversial law of May 27, 1915, regarding the resettlement and relocation of the local Armenian population. The law was entitled "Temporary Legislation on the Measures to Be Taken by the Army for the Defiers of Government Authority during Wartime" ("Vakt-i seferde icraât-1 hükümete karşı gelenler için cihet-i askeriyece ittihaz olunacak tedâbir hakkında kanun-u muvakkat").15

The legislation did not introduce any new regulations specific to the administration of the Istanbul Patriarchate, yet the relations between the Ottoman government and the patriarchate were severely strained after it was enacted. During the implementation of the legislation, the patriarch made several complaints to the government, which responded with its own set of justifications. In the course of the execution of the law the patriarch and the internal administration of religious affairs in the patriarchate were kept exempt. The CUP government was to address the issues about the structure and administration of the patriarchate with new legislation. ¹⁶

PREPARATION OF A NEW CHARTER FOR THE ARMENIAN PATRIARCHATE OF ISTANBUL

After the CUP government discontinued the relocations of the Armenians to Syria, a new charter was prepared on the status of the Istanbul Patriarchate, in close relation to the ongoing debates on the influence of the Catholicosate of Etchmiadzin over the Armenian population in the Ottoman state. In this regard the new charter could be accepted as a second measure taken to deal with the Ottoman Armenian population after "the law of resettlement and relocation." The new charter aimed to address the influence of the Catholicosate of Etchmiadzin, which was seen as a factor contributing to the Armenian public unrest in favor of Russian interests.¹⁷ During the preparations of the charter, the minister of the interior, Talat Paşa, drew utmost attention to the detrimental policies of the Catholicosate of Etchmiadzin. He informed Cemal Paşa, the commander-in-chief of the 4th Army, about the new charter and stated: "The relationship between the Ottoman Armenians and the Catholicosate of Etchmiadzin is blocked." ¹⁸ He also pointed out that the Armenian Catholicosate as an institution had traditionally been the spiritual and administrative headquarters of the Armenian Church. Therefore the CUP government's efforts to reconfigure all the Armenian churches under the spiritual and administrative leadership of the Sis Catholicosate would undermine the authority of the Catholicosate of Etchmiadzin over the Armenian population in the Ottoman state. Furthermore, the duties of the patriarchate were meant to be assigned only to one spiritual leader. With this aim the Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul recognized the primacy of the Catholicosate of Sis. Hence spiritual leadership was transferred from Istanbul to Sis, where the new catholicos was to reside as well. 19 The CUP government then changed its plans, however, and transferred the catholicosate to Jerusalem for two reasons. First, most of the Armenians at that juncture had already been relocated to towns close to Jerusalem. Second, because Jerusalem is a holy place for Christians, its prominence for Armenians was a matter of course. As a result of the reconfiguration in the location of the catholicosate, the detrimental influence of the politicized Catholicosate of Etchmiadzin over the rest of the Armenian churches and Armenian communities was severely undermined.²⁰

In order to execute the new Nizamname regarding the change in the status of the Armenian Patriarchate, the CUP government needed to choose a clerk who would be sufficiently well qualified to function as the catholicos of all Armenians. To make sure that the Ottoman Armenians

were removed from the religious and political influences of the Catholicosate of Etchmiadzin, the Ottoman state needed to instate a man of the cloth equal in rank to him. The most appropriate person for this critical position was Sahak Efendi, who was the catholicos of Sis at that time. Cemal Paşa was exclusively assigned by Talat Paşa to secure Sahak Efendi's approval of his new title. Cemal Paşa also stated his opinion on the previous situation: "The Patriarchate of Jerusalem did not have tangible power but rather was mostly dependent on the Istanbul Patriarchate." ²¹

After receiving Talat Paşa's telegram, ²² Cemal Paşa met with Sahak Efendi in Jerusalem to discuss the new Nizamname that would bring about significant changes in the administration of Armenian churches. Sahak Efendi expressed his reservations about the division of the new Catholicosate of Jerusalem and the Calicosate of Etchmiadzin but accepted his role in the new structure. ²³ It should be noted that Cemal Paşa himself thought that the former patriarch, Maghakia Ormanian Efendi, who also resided in Jerusalem, was more appropriate for the position than Sahak Efendi. He did relate his personal view on the issue to Talat Paşa before his meeting with Sahak Efendi. Ormanian Efendi had the status of patriarch, however, and the new head of the catholicosate was required to be a catholicos, so Cemal Paşa had to reconsider his own position. ²⁴ But he did appeal to the government for clarifications on the patriarch's duties regarding the Armenians in the region. ²⁵

THE NEW ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE OF THE PATRIARCHATE AFTER THE AMENDMENT

Following the preliminary negotiations about its feasibility, the Nizamname was enacted on August 10, 1916, issued in the Takvim-i Vekayi.²⁶ Consequently Patriarch Zaven Efendi was removed from his office and sent out of Istanbul. He then went to Baghdad and Mosul, respectively.²⁷

According to article 1 of the preface to the Nizamname on the "Armenian Catholicosate and Patriarchate," the Catholicosate of Sis and Ahtamar and the Patriarchate of Jerusalem and Istanbul were merged into a unitary body under the primacy of the Catholicosate of Jerusalem. Hence all the Gregorian Armenians became subject to a catholicosate, which consolidated the spiritual and administrative leadership. In addition the influence of the Catholicosate of Etchmiadzin over the Ottoman Armenians was completely inhibited. The Mar-Yakub Monastery in Jerusalem was the new official residence of the spiritual leader, who was going to execute the tasks of both patriarch and catholicos. ²⁸ His spiritual

authority was confined within the territories of the Ottoman state. Furthermore, it held that the position of the patriarch required the following key credentials: previous service as a bishop; positive reputation among the Armenians and the state elite; no criminal record; experience of previously governing an officially authorized organization for more than five years; and being at least forty years old.²⁹

The patriarch was given the status of a government official and held responsible for implementing the government's orders and carrying out his duties, which were identified in the new Nizamname.³⁰ The patriarch was subject to the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Mezahib Nezareti) and could only appeal to it for issues regarding religion.³¹

The amendment removed the Armenian General Assembly, viewed by the Ottoman elite as a potential source of political conflict, and replaced it with two new institutions composed of joint (*muhtelit*) and spiritual (*ruhani*) assemblies. The spiritual assembly had twelve members, half of whom were government appointees (*berât-ı âlî sahibi murah-haslar*) and the other half bishops. The president of the assembly was the patriarch, and members were to serve for two years. The spiritual assembly had the following tasks: to supervise the religious affairs of the Armenian community; to preserve the religious values of the church; to ensure that the employees of churches maintained a proper work ethic; to educate newly qualified clergies; and to investigate complaints against church officials.³²

The joint assembly consisted of twelve members: four members from the spiritual assembly and eight laymen from the Armenian community. The patriarch was designated to be the chair of the assembly, along with another member who was assigned to preside over certain meetings in the assembly. The members of the spiritual assembly were elected, while the civil members in the joint assembly were mostly recruited through authorized churches from the different provinces. No more than one member could come from any of the provinces, with one member to be selected by the Patriarchate of Jerusalem. The members were selected either from the community of their electoral districts or from the community located around the headquarters of the patriarchate and were expected to serve in the assembly for two years. The objectives of the joint assembly involved handling the economic affairs of the patriarchate and dealing with the expenditures of the churches and monasteries affiliated with the patriarchate and the institutions founded by the Armenian community.³³

The patriarch had to maintain equal distance from both of the assemblies without favoring one over the other. The members had to

reciprocate his impartial and equal attitude.³⁴ Thus both of the assemblies and the patriarch would work together in harmony and each assembly would have some knowledge of the decisions made in the other assembly.

It would be illegal for the assemblies to convene without the presence of the patriarch or a deputy assigned by the patriarch. Hence any law enacted within a meeting not chaired by the patriarch would be regarded as null and void. If members violated the Nizamname's code of behavior, the patriarch had the right first to admonish them orally and then to dismiss them, based on the decision reached by the majority in both assemblies. Dismissed members could not join any of the assemblies again. If members of the assemblies pursued political goals beyond the agreed-upon set of religious responsibilities and engaged in activities such as mobilizing other Armenians for a political cause, then the Ministry of Religious Affairs had the right to dismiss members or change their status and duties.³⁵

Having set the patriarch as the sole representative of the Armenian community, the charter also established the balance of power between the assembly and the patriarchate in order to prevent the patriarch from exploiting his powers. The patriarchate did not fully control the assemblies, which in turn give them partial independence from the patriarch. Furthermore, members of either assembly had the right to object to the decisions of the patriarchate. Objections were first to be delivered to the assembly that was relevant to the member in question. Then members could demand a written response from the patriarch on behalf of the particular assembly if a majority consensus was reached. The patriarch had to respond to the formal objections within fifteen days. If the particular assembly was not satisfied by the response of the patriarch, it had the right to apply to the Court of the House to call both assemblies for an emergency meeting. If the court formally acknowledged the demand for an emergency meeting, the assemblies had to be convened to discuss the matter under the presidency of the bishops with the highest status. When the majority in each assembly stated opinions in opposition to the patriarch and came to a decision accordingly, the patriarch had to resign within twenty-four hours. If the emergency meeting was concluded in favor of the patriarch, however, then the member who had proposed the formal objection had to resign promptly.³⁶

In the case of a patriarch who was disloyal to the government in breach of the Nizamname the Court of the House could send an initial warning to the patriarch. If the alleged behavior recurred, the court was to refer the matter to Bâb-1 Âlî. In this case the patriarch could be

removed from the office by order of the sultan (*irâde-i seniyye*) or by a decision from the Assembly of Deputies (Meclis-i Vükelâ). After the removal of the patriarch, the Court of the House had to call each assembly for the election of a "proxy governor of the patriarchy" (Patrik Kaymakamı), who was to execute the whole process regarding the election of the new patriarch. Any terms that called for the removal of the patriarch also bound all members, bishops, and clerks.³⁷

As far as the internal affairs of the patriarchate were concerned, regulations designated the patriarch as the community's primarily responsible figure. The Nizamname's jurisdiction was also extended to the lower divisions (*murahhasliklar*) to regulate their administrative structure.³⁸ The lower offices were organized in a way that made them responsible for at least 15,000 Armenians. Jerusalem was designated as the headquarters of the Armenian community, so a delegate was to be assigned to the Istanbul Patriarchate as a bishop in the role of deputy to the patriarch. The appointed delegate was equal to other delegates (*murahhaslar*) in terms of title, status, and duties. Delegations (*murahhaslik merkezleri*) consisted of two consultative committees, clerical and civil. Yet neither of the committees would have any legal liability; they would serve a consultative function in regard to the appointed delegate. They could only act as a consultative body upon a formal request. Every delegation office (*murahassalik*) had its own budget and particular duties.³⁹

THE NIZAMNAME IN PRACTICE

With the new law having set the new regulations, the constitution of the Armenian millet enacted in 1863 was fully repealed. When the new Nizamname was enacted, Sahak Efendi, whose approval had been secured beforehand, was officially notified about his new position. Sahak Efendi approved his new status as the catholicos of all Armenians and announced his loyalty to the new role and to the Ottoman government. His salary was raised to ten thousand kuruş as a reward for this new title.

The deputy of the Istanbul Patriarchate continued to perform his previous responsibilities in the province of Istanbul and in the assemblies of Üsküdar and Beyoğlu. The spiritual leader of the Istanbul Patriarchate had to attend the city council meetings in person, however, unlike the chief rabbi or the Greek patriarch's privilege to designate a metropolitan bishop to attend the meetings. The duties of the deputy to the Istanbul patriarch were carried out by Yervant Efendi, who served as a deputy patriarch in the term of Zaven Efendi during the armistice. 44

Toward the end of 1917 British troops advanced into Jerusalem. The city was on the brink of invasion. In the face of the British advance the Ottoman government thought that the catholicosate would not be able to perform its duties in the region in the long run. Upon the request of the Ottoman government the headquarters of the catholicosate and the patriarchate were transferred to Damascus. Accordingly Sahak Efendi came to Damascus, and other officials of the patriarchate also started to perform their duties there with the help of the local committees. 45 Jerusalem was invaded by the British troops in December 1917, a few months after the transfer of the patriarchate. As a result of this development Sahak Efendi and other officials expressed concerns about their health because of the toll of traveling in their old age and the humid climate of Damascus. These concerns later turned into an actual health crisis for the officials. The patriarch requested that the Ministry of Religious Affairs transfer their base to the Sis monastery, the province of Adana, or any other place that the government would find appropriate. 46 Based on the decision of the General Assembly, the catholicos, the patriarch, and the other officials were given permission to transfer to the northern parts of Syria. Due to the security concerns of the patriarchy, however, Sahak Efendi refused to move there and continued to reside in Damascus. 47

POLITICAL AND JUDICIAL REASONS FOR THE AMENDMENT

On the day the Nizamname came into force *Tanin* newspaper published it along with an article in the column "Siyasiyyat" regarding the government's push for a new amendment. "The new administrative structure within the Armenian Patriarchate aims to address the concerns of the Ottoman government and the Armenian community for the benefit of both Armenians and the Ottoman government." The article included a section on the main objectives of the Ottoman government in the particular amendment: first, to limit the influence of the Catholicosate of Etchmiadzin over the Armenian community in the Ottoman state; second, to remove the General Assembly of the Patriarchate. According to the Ottoman government, "[p]atriarchs previously lost their authority over their subjects and execution of the internal affairs of the patriarchate because of the influence of the revolutionary committees and their supporters through the patriarchate assembly."

The Ottoman elite saw the Armenian General Assembly of the Patriarchate as a source of problems during the rule of Abdülhamid II and

believed that it should be removed to ensure the authority of the government. This view was stated in the article as follows:

The Armenian "national assembly" [meclis-i milli], which is referred to as a "supreme council general" [meclis-i umum-i] within the circles of the patriarchate, is acting as if it is a chamber of deputies [meclis-i mebusan]. In this regard the institution, which has enjoyed considerable autonomy on an unprecedented scale, should be removed.

In the heyday of the Ottoman state the government benevolently gave concessions to non-Muslims for the sake of the dissemination of liberal ideas. The concession granted to the Greek Patriarchate is one of most crucial ones, yet their autonomy only involves certain liberties in the execution of their own religious rules and the procedures to implement those rules. The Greek Patriarchate consists of two committees. The committee called the "synod" is composed of only clergymen; the other committee is a civil assembly composed of eight members. Half are elected from the synod and the other half from the laymen. The synod deals only with religious affairs, and the civil committee is occupied with the administration of the foundations and institutions affiliated with the church. In addition, along with the two committees, the Armenian Patriarchate has an assembly in which the patriarch himself elects 120 members out of 140. The third assembly in a way acts as an Armenian national assembly. This privilege was given to the Armenian Patriarchate by the grand vezir in 1279 (1863). Under the current conditions, however, the Ottoman government can no longer allow the patriarchate to enjoy the same rights, because the current autonomy of the patriarchate embodies an independent state within a state. Furthermore, the Armenian national assembly since its foundation has acted as a political organization by triggering public unrest and mobilizing the nationalist sentiments among Armenians.

Some of those political factions of the Armenian Patriarchate have organized political activities aspiring to the removal of the government and hence allied with the Russians and the British to realize their nationalist ideals. Within that political environment the patriarch and the assemblies within the patriarchate pursued a political agenda rather than administering spiritual affairs by compromising with the political factions for the sake of protecting

their status. It was still in public memory how the fiftieth anniversary of the "Armenian national assembly" was celebrated.

Needless to say, there can be no assembly like this in any part of the world. Taking the consequences of the privileges into account, the rights that are enjoyed by the Armenian Patriarchate benefit neither the state nor the Armenian millet. After the Russians and the British got in touch with the political dissidents within the patriarchate a nationalist-oriented revolutionary organization emerged, which was mediated by the patriarchate. Consequently the patriarchate fell into the hands of cruel and ambitious politicians. Those traitors first elected clerics inclined to create public unrest then collaboratively worked for the removal of the government.

Here are the consequences of those policies: fifty years ago the Armenian community was given concessions on a wide scale in reciprocation for their loyalty to the state. The political factions that exist within the patriarchate, however, attempted to trigger a public unrest that is detrimental to both the Ottoman state and Armenians. That confirms that the Ottoman government's concession granted to the Armenians fifty years ago was highly redundant. Thus there was no need for further consideration, and the government should act accordingly. It should be certainly stated that the new administrative structure of the patriarchate within the new Nizamname would take into consideration not only the government but also the Armenians. Hence as long as the patriarchate remained in the hands of the political factions it damaged not only the spiritual but also the worldly affairs of the Armenians.⁴⁹

Similar concerns were also raised in the newspaper *Tercüman-ı Haki-kat* by the famous nationalist of the era Ahmet Ağaoğlu. He mainly drew attention to the autonomy of the supreme council general of the patriarchate and to the influence of the Catholicosate of Etchmiadzin over the Ottoman Armenians. According to him, the inter-religious conflict reached its peak during the era of Abdülhamid II. While it was extremely difficult for Muslims to come together to discuss any kind of political matter during his authoritarian rule, the sultan failed to prevent the politicization of the Armenian Patriarchate. In the end it was the Muslims, whose concerns were left unheard, who suffered the most from political repression. According to Ağaoğlu, the new amendment aimed at

reconfiguring the relations between the state and the Armenian millet along the lines of the Ottoman constitution, by ensuring that all the subjects of the Ottoman state remained equal.⁵⁰

Based on public opinion on the politicization of the Armenian Patriarchate and the various reasons discussed above the CUP government did not implement the Nizamname solely due to the war conditions. Indeed World War I and the Armenian rebellions acted as a catalyst for the CUP government to come up with a new amendment on the administrative structure of the Armenian Patriarchate. But the CUP government's critical view of the patriarchate stemmed from its resentment of the Tanzimat reforms, which aimed to address intersectarian relations. During the CUP government's convention in 1916, it was agreed that all the courts would be reorganized under the authority of the Ministry of Justice. The debates on centralizing the judiciary also severely criticized the patriarchate's autonomous structure in the administration of its own judicial matters. The CUP government's critical view of the Tanzimat reforms regarding the Armenian Patriarchate was especially vivid when three articles were published consecutively in the Magazine of Islam (Islam Mecmuasi):

Prior to the Tanzimat era, embassies and patriarchates were enjoying certain privileges related to the judiciary; in other words, they were exercising state functions. Hence the CUP was not really responsible for the establishment of these arrangements. Even if the CUP intellectuals did not establish these arrangements, however, they continued to view the institutions as legitimate and applied them to the Muslim millet. In other words they did not struggle for the removal of these institutions; rather they sought to retain them.

To have a full grasp of the political mind-set [nazariyat-1 idariyesi] of the Tanzimat elite it is essential to analyze the Tanzimat rulers' two key terms that pertain to the reformation of the administration [1stilâhat-1 idariye]. The terms are community [cemaat], and religious affairs [umur-1 mezhebiye]. Within Ottoman circles the Ottoman state is the conglomeration of the various religious communities rather than individuals. They imagined a Confederation of Communities (Cemaatler Konfederasyonu), in which Muslim and non-Muslim communities would coexist under the spiritual leadership of the Ottoman caliphate, referred to as "Cemaat-i İslâmiyye." The sultan would be the "suzerain" of the

confederation and envoys, and the patriarchs would be regarded as his vassals. The sultan embodied the caliphate at the same time, so the superiority of the Muslim millet over the non-Muslims was ensured.

Tanzimat circles exploited the ambiguities in the definition of sect and gave the title umur-i mezhebiye to the issues related to judiciary, ethical, and religious matters, whereas the word "sect" is derived etymologically from the French word "doctrine." In this sense the sect attributed to an imam is jurisprudentially a doctrine in essence. What the French called "affaires des cultures" corresponds to our *umur-i mezhebiye*, and "Ministère des Cultes" stands for "Mezhep Nezareti" [Ministry of Justice]. "Culte" is equivalent to worship in French, and hence its appropriate translation would be "ministry of praying" [umur-u taabbudiye]. As the issues related to praying should be viewed as being a religious affair, the state should ensure liberty in the practice of religion. Yet to guarantee liberty in religious affairs there was no need to give political privileges by granting religious institutions a political status. Ali Pasha did not mind giving political concessions to the Armenian millet, to grant them a national assembly and national legitimacy along with religious liberty.⁵¹

The new amendment rejected the separation of judicial affairs, argued for their unification, and reduced the authority of religious institutions to a mere administration of religious affairs. The politicization of the patriarchate was the core issue that the CUP government sought to address. According to Yusuf Hikmet Bayur, "If the Armenian community had been governed based on the new constitution since 1863, the foreign powers' agitation would have been less detrimental, and maybe the disaster of 1915 would not have taken place." ⁵²

CONCLUSION

In order to eliminate the administrative issues that were embedded in the institutional structure of the Armenian Patriarchate, the CUP government reconfigured it by enacting the new constitution. Yet the new institutional structure that the CUP established could only stay in power until 1918. Due to the short period the CUP government could neither succeed in establishing a stable structure nor have time to implement its plans. In the aftermath of World War I and the Armistice of Mudros in 1918, based on the terms of the agreements and the British pressure, the

new charter was abrogated. The Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul was granted the status that it had enjoyed before the Nizamname. Therefore Istanbul became the Armenian spiritual and political headquarters once again. Patriarch Zaven Efendi, who had been sent away from Istanbul, was assigned to work there again. Thus, starting from the Armistice of Mudros, the administrative structure was restored along the terms of the 1863 Armenian constitution. During the years between the Treaty of Lausanne and the Armistice of Mudros, the Armenian Patriarchate continued to collaborate with the Allies and the Greek Patriarchate. After the Turkish national struggle, Zaven Efendi resigned from his office and had to leave Turkey before the Treaty of Lausanne. Despite the departure of Zaven as patriarch, the new Turkish government conducted its relations with the Armenian Patriarchate based on the terms of the 1863 constitution.

NOTES

- 1. For a detailed account on this issue, see Canan Seyfeli, İstanbul Ermeni Patrikliği.
- 2. Feroz Ahmad, İttihat ve Terakki (1908–1914), 190.
- Ali Arslan, Ermeni Papalığı, 124; Sadi Koçaş, Tarih Boyunca Ermeniler ve Türk-Ermeni İlişkileri, 186.
- 4. Ali Arslan, Kutsal Ermeni Papalığı: Eçmiyazin Kilisesi'nde Stratejik Savaşlar (Istanbul: Paraf Yayınları, 2010), 125.
- 5. Ovanes Kaçaznuni, *Taşnak Partisi'nin Yapacağı Bir Şey Yok*, 32–37. Ovanes Kaçaznuni (Kachaznuni), who was the prime minister of the first Armenian Republic, acknowledged the necessity of a voluntary army with certain reservations and aptly noted that "[f]rom today's vantage point, it is meaningless to ask whether voluntary units were necessary at that juncture. Historical events have their own rationality within the context in which they operated. In the autumn of 1914 Armenian voluntary military units were established and mobilized against the Turks. That was the inevitable outcome of the grievances that the Armenian millet harbored for a quarter-century. The militarization of the Armenians was an output of the psychological grievances that was inevitably mobilized under the appropriate conditions. The designated role for the Dashnaktsutyun in this process could only be that of a facilitator, because its resources were only capable enough to activate an already existing organization that was self-mobilized and self-motivated": ibid., 33.
- 6. Askeri Tarih Belgeleri Dergisi 32, no. 83, Belge No. 1901, 33-36.
- 7. For example, the Hunchak komitadjis exerted pressure on the Armenian priests in Samsun and Bafra. See Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi/Prime Ministry Ottoman Archive, Istanbul (hereafter BOA), Dâhiliye Nezareti Kalem-i Mahsus Müdüriyeti (DH.KMS), no. 18/27, 11 Mart 1330 (March 24, 1914).
- 8. The White Book (Beyaz Kitap), which was published by the Ottoman government, states that "it is apparent that the Armenian Patriarchate, the revolutionary committees, and especially the catholicos were involved in activities to remove the Ottoman government, justify the foreign intervention, and establish their own

- state. The revolutionary committees and the patriarchate have intended to realize those aims on the pretext of demanding reformation." *Ermeni Komitelerinin A'mal ve Harekât-1 İhtilâliyyesi*, 297.
- 9. Zaven Der Yeghiayan, My Patriarchal Memoirs, 33.
- 10. Ibid., 34.
- "Ottoman Armenians, especially Zaven Efendi, patriarch of Istanbul, are not reluctant to pursue policies that are detrimental to the Turkish people." Alpay Kabacalı, ed., *Hatıralar*, 415.
- 12. Alpay Kabacalı, ed., Talât Paşa'nın Anıları, 61; Celal Bayar, Ben de Yazdım, 44.
- 13. For the inquiry on the Urfa events, see BOA, Hâriciye Nezareti Siyasi Kısım (HR.SYS), no. 2883/4.
- 14. Kabacalı, *Talât Paşa'nın Anıları*, 63, 68–69. For a detailed account of the Urfa rebellions of 1915, see *Ermeni Komitelerinin A'mal*, 338–53.
- 15. For an overview on the Ottoman government's view of the legislation and its phases of implementation, see Azmi Süslü, Ermeniler ve 1915 Tehcir Olayı; Bülent Bakar, Ermeni Tehciri; Hikmet Özdemir, Ermeniler: Sürgün ve Göç (Ankara: TTK Yayınları, 2005); Yusuf Halaçoğlu, Ermeni Tehciri ve Gerçekler (1914–1918) (Ankara: TTK Yayınları, 2001); and idem, Ermeni Tehciri.
- 16. It is significant to note that the implementation of the 1915 legislation is an issue beyond the realm of this chapter, which seeks to address the administrative relationship between the Ottoman government and the Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul. Furthermore, the reasons behind the implementation of the legislation and the criticisms of whether it was unjust are not part of my research question. This chapter's main concern is to examine what characterizes the Ottoman government's relationship with the Armenian Patriarchate during World War I and then provide a descriptive analysis of the governments subsequent regulations regarding the administration of the patriarchate.
- 17. Ali Arslan, Kutsal Ermeni Papalığı: Eçmiyazin Kilisesi'nde Stratejik Savaşlar (İstanbul: Paraf Yayınları, 2010), 131–32; Zaven Der Yeghiayan, My Patriarchal Memoirs, 119–20.
- 18. "Memâlik-i Osmâniyye Ermenilerinin Rusya'daki Eçmiyazin Katagigosluğuyla münâsebeti kat' olunmuştur (kesilmiştir)," BOA, Dâhiliye Nezareti Şifre Kalemi (DH.ŞFR), no. 63/136.
- Ibid., coded telegram from the minister of foreign affairs, Talat Bey, to the commander-in-chief of the 4th Army, dated 17 Nisan 1332 (April 30, 1916).
- 20. Arslan, Kutsal Ermeni Papalığı, 133.
- 21. BOA, DH.ŞFR, no. 63/136, coded telegram from the minister of foreign affairs, Talat Bey, to the commander-in-chief of the 4th Army, dated 17 Nisan 1332 (April 30, 1916).
- 22. In response to the telegram Cemal Paşa stated to Talat Paşa that he would be going to Jerusalem to meet with Sahak Efendi in ten to fifteen days. BOA, DH.ŞFR. no. 518/46, dated 18 Nisan 1332 (May 1, 1916).
- BOA, DH.ŞFR, no. 522/59, coded telegram from the commander-in-chief of the 4th Army to the minister of the interior, Talat Bey, dated 25 Mayıs 1332 (July 7, 1916).
- 24. BOA, DH.ŞFR, no. 517/89, coded telegram from the commander-in-chief of the

- 4th Army to the minister of the interior, Talat Bey, dated 13 Nisan 1332 (April 26, 1916).
- 25. BOA, DH.ŞFR, no. 527/49, coded telegram from the commander-in-chief of the 4th Army to the minister of the interior, Talat Bey, dated 25 Temmuz 1332 (August 4, 1916).
- 26. For the full text of the Nizamname of the Armenian Catholicosate and Patriarchate, see *Düstur: Tertib-i Sânî*, vol. 8 (Istanbul: Evkaf Matbaası, 1928), 1240–51; BOA, Dosya Usulü İrâdeler (İ.DUİT.), no. 135/20; BOA, Meclis-i Vükela Mazbatası (MV), no. 244/22; Takvim-i Vekayi, no. 2611, 28 Temmuz 1332 (August 10, 1916); *Tanin*, no. 2752, 29 Temmuz 1332 (August 11, 1916).
- 27. Der Yeghiayan, My Patriarchal Memoirs, 122.
- 28. Ibid., 123. According to the Nizamname, the spiritual leader who was designated to be the head of the new Armenian religious administration was titled the patriarch. In the official correspondence, however, he was given the title catholicos-patriarch, an amalgamation of two religious titles. The patriarch of that period, Zaven Efendi, emphasized that the new regulation on the title of the spiritual leader was an unprecedented practice throughout the history of the Armenian Church.
- 29. Nizamname of the Armenian Catholicosate and Patriarchate, m. 1, m. 4.
- 30. After the enactment of the Nizamname, the Council of Ministers (Divan-1 Hümayun) was given the responsibility for Sahak Efendi's order of appointment (berât-1 âlî). See BOA, MV, no. 245/3. Consequently the patriarch appealed to the governor of Jerusalem to accelerate the procedures because of the difficulties in overseeing the daily responsibilities: BOA, DH.SFR, no. 544/116, coded telegram from the governor of Jerusalem to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, dated 22 Kanun-1 Sani 1332 (February 4, 1917). Upon the request of Sahak Efendi, his order of appointment was enacted regarding his title as Armenian catholicos and patriarch: BOA, Hâriciye Nezareti Hukuk Müşavirliği İstişare Odası (HR.HMŞ.İŞO), no. 136/13, lef 4 (13 Rebiülahir 1335–24 Kanun-1 Sani 1332–6 Şubat 1917). The order of appointment was also submitted to the patriarch himself on the same day: BOA, DH.SFR. no 73/25, coded telegram from the Court of the House to the governor of Jerusalem, dated 4 Şubat 1332 (February 17, 1917). Upon the request of the Council of Ministers, one copy of the order of appointment was also submitted to it: BOA, Bâb-1 Âlî Evrak Odası (BEO), no. 4489/336602, the official document sent to the Council of Ministers dated 25 Teşrin-i Evvel 1333 (October 25, 1917).
- 31. Nizamname of the Armenian Catholicosate and Patriarchate, m. 2.
- 32. Ibid., m. 5, m. 6.
- 33. Ibid., m. 7, m. 8.
- 34. Ibid., m. 10.
- 35. Ibid., m. 11, m. 13, m. 33.
- 36. Ibid., m. 14, m. 15, m. 16.
- 37. Ibid., m. 3, m. 32.
- 38. Ibid., section 5, m. 17-21.
- 39. Ibid., m. 23, m. 24, m. 26, m. 27.
- 40. Ibid., m. 37.

- 41. BOA, DH.ŞFR, no. 66/202, coded telegram from the minister of the interior, Talat Bey, to the commander-in-chief of the 4th Army, Cemal Paşa, dated 28 Temmuz 1332 (August 10, 1916); BOA, DH.ŞFR, no. 66/220, coded telegram from Court of House to Cemal Paşa.
- 42. BOA, DH.ŞFR, nr. 529/3, coded telegram sent from the commander-in-chief of the 4th Army to the minister of the interior, dated 4 Ağustos 1332 (August 17, 1916).
- 43. BOA, MV, no. 203/6, official report mandated by the Assembly of the Deputies; BOA, BEO, no. 4427/331962, lef 1, official bill sent from the Sadrazamlik to the Court of the House and Treasury Department, dated 8 Ağustos 1332 (August 21, 1916); BOA, BEO, no. 4427/331962, lef 3, telegram sent by Sahak Efendi to show his gratitude to the Sadrazamlik, dated 20 Ağustos 1332 (September 2, 1916); BOA, MV, no. 245/35. Sahak Efendi's previous salary for spiritual leadership was 2,500 kuruş. Upon the request of the Treasury Department, the increase in his salary was charged in the budget. The mandated bill of the Assembly of Deputies that ordered to pay the monthly wage gap of 7,975 kuruş to Sahak Efendi was dated 18 Teşrin-i Evvel 1332 (October 1, 1916).
- 44. BOA, BEO, no. 4518/338821, lef 2. The legislation of the Council of State (Şura-yı Devlet Mülkiye) and the Ministry of Education (Maarif Dairesi), dated 20 Teşrin-i Evvel 1333 (October 20, 1917).
- 45. In the process of the transfer of the catholicos-patriarch and other officials of the patriarchate the secret fund of the 4th Army covered the daily expenditures. The necessary foodstuffs were to be sent to the patriarchate by the army officials and one "kiyye" (1,283 grams) was to be priced at one lira. The expenditure for the food would be covered by the Syrian governor, who would be reimbursed by the 4th Army. For a more detailed account, see Hikmet Özdemir, *Cemal Paşa ve Ermeni Göçmenler*, 223–24.
- 46. BOA, BEO, no. 4510/338204, lef 3. The proposal sent by the catholicos-patriarch to the Court of the House, dated 24 Şubat 1334 (February 24, 1918).
- 47. BOA, DH.ŞFR, no. 92/197, Ministry of Internal Affairs request for formal information from the governor of Aleppo on the conditions of Sahak Efendi, telegram sent by the Ministry of Internal Affairs to the governor of Aleppo, "Does he emigrate or still reside in Damascus," dated 21 Teşrin-i Evvel 1334 (October 21, 1918), BOA, DH.KMS, no. 49-1/5, in response to that telegram sent by the governor of Aleppo to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, dated 22 Teşrin-i Evvel 1334 (October 22, 1918).
- 48. "The Armenian Patriarchate," Tanin 2752, August 11, 1916.
- 49. Ibid.
- Ahmet Ağaoğlu, "Ermeni Kilise Teşkilatı," Tercüman-1 Hakikat 12688, August 12, 1916.
- 51. Quoted in Yusuf Hikmet Bayur, *Türk İnkılabı Tarihi*, vol. 3:4, 462–67.
- 52. Ibid., vol. 3:3, 59.
- 53. For a detailed account of this issue, see Ramazan Erhan Güllü, "Mondros Mütarekesi'nin Ardından Ermeni ve Rum Patrikhanelerinin İşbirliği (30 Ekim 1918–11 Ekim 1922)," 575–605.

The Deportation of the Armenians and the Issue of Abandoned Properties in Kayseri

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One of the origins of the Turkish Republic was the drastic change in the demographic composition of Anatolia following the Balkan Wars of 1912-13 and World War I. According to the population census of 1906, the Ottoman population in Turkey's current boundaries was about 15 million: 80 percent Muslims, 10 percent Greeks, 7 percent Armenians, approximately 1 percent Bulgarians, and 1 percent Jews and other groups in small numbers such as Protestants, Armenian Catholics, Syriacs, and Roman Catholics (Latins). The population of Turkey in 1927 decreased to 13.6 million despite the high number of Muslim immigrants to Turkey from the Ottoman territories that had been lost. This change was a result of factors such as the deportation of Armenians, the exchange of populations between Turkey and Greece, and the high number of deaths in the successive wars. This process greatly altered the composition of the population. The non-Muslim population decreased to 2.6 percent of the total population by 1927. This change in the demographic composition of Turkey corresponded to a significant era in Turkish history: the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the establishment of the Turkish Republic. Thus this process of demographic transformation became a vital point in the socioeconomic foundation of the new Republic.

The Balkan Wars could be evaluated as an important element in the demographic transformation of Anatolia. They not only signaled the loss of Balkan lands but also meant a significant change in the population composition of the empire. The number of non-Muslims decreased remarkably within the total Ottoman population, and the influx of refugees from the lost Ottoman territories emerged as a great problem for

the authorities.² The Balkan Wars also had a crucial impact on the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), most of whose main leaders originated from the Balkan lands.³ In the eyes of the CUP elite the core of the empire was lost and a new core had to be created. Thus the loss of Balkan lands directed the CUP to focus on Anatolia as the motherland.⁴

These wars changed the boundaries and demography of the empire and also gave an impetus to Turkish nationalism among the ruling elite. Even though Turkish nationalism had gradually influenced the Young Turks long before the Balkan Wars, M. Şükrü Hanioğlu claims that the wars "proved the CUP's long-standing assertion that, with few exceptions, the non-Turkish communities of the empire inclined toward separatism." 5 With the equation of the non-Muslim communities as secessionist groups, they began to be regarded as unreliable by the CUP leaders. Studies on the population policies of the CUP illustrate the approach of its leaders: the only way to create a homeland in Anatolia was to establish a Muslim majority in these territories. The dissolution of the empire could be prevented only through this majority. Within this framework the historiography that analyzes the population movements as a result of the Balkan Wars and World War I generally focuses on the central government policies and evaluates the demographic change on the basis of demographic engineering and the homogenization or Turkification of the population.6

The Balkan Wars changed the demographic composition of the Ottoman Empire because of the loss of territories and the influx of Muslim refugees but also triggered other population movements, such as the exchange of populations with Bulgaria and Greece. This was a period of expulsion of minorities not only from the Ottoman lands but also from the Balkans. While pressure was put on the Christian populations in the Ottoman Empire, a similar process was implemented by the Balkan states against the Muslim groups. Therefore these years were characterized by ongoing migrations between the states representing an exodus of minorities.⁷ In this context the exchange of populations was negotiated between the Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria just after the Balkan Wars, for an important number of Bulgarians and Muslims fled to the other side during the war. This population movement on both sides caused Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire to sign a population exchange agreement on a voluntary basis on September 29, 1913. The Greek population also became subject to a similar agreement. In the early months of 1914 the Greek population living at the western coastal areas was forced to leave the

Ottoman Empire: about 150,000 Ottoman Greeks fled to Greece. An exchange of populations agreement was signed with Greece in 1914 in the face of these events. The outbreak of World War I, however, prevented its implementation. These policies and the expulsion of the non-Muslims were one side of the process, but the Muslim communities were also subject to demographic policies of the CUP government to secure a Muslim and Turkish population in Anatolia. Fuat Dündar claims that they were not settled randomly: the Muslim immigrants and refugees were subject to a settlement plan instead. The outbreak of World War I signaled passing to a new stage in the demographic transformation of Anatolia.

The population movements within the empire and the CUP policies to change the demographic composition of Anatolia have attracted the attention of scholars, especially in the last decade. These studies are important to evaluate central government policies regarding demography, but the socioeconomic impacts of the demographic change on these localities remain a neglected side of the story. Most existing studies are constructed on the basis of the documents sent from the center to the localities. This kind of research contributes to our understanding of the central government policies (the CUP). But a gap exists regarding the development of the story in the localities. Our knowledge of the implementation of the CUP policies in these localities and their impacts remains limited compared to more general studies. This deficiency in the local histories mainly stems from the absence of archival documents sent from the localities to the center. The new documents made public in the Ottoman Archives in recent years, however, have given historians a chance to evaluate developments in the localities.

This chapter analyzes the impacts of the central government policies on Kayseri during World War I. The basic question it addresses is how the population policies of the CUP affected the demographic composition of the city. What were the implications of this demographic transformation on Kayseri's social and economic life, especially within the context of abandoned properties (*emval-i metruke*)?¹⁰ In order to analyze the topic of abandoned properties in Kayseri, the process that led to the deportation of the Armenians and the deportation order is examined briefly. It is not the aim of this study, however, to test the relevance of demographic engineering, Turkification, or the thesis of homogenization of the population on the basis of the deportation pattern in Kayseri. This study tries to explain how the central government orders were implemented in Kayseri, whether it was called demographic engineering or Turkification of

the population. To what extent did local features (such as the social and economic dynamics of the city and the character of the governors) shape the implementation of these orders?

DEPORTATION OF THE OTTOMAN ARMENIANS

Deportation of Armenians was brought to the agenda in a process that witnessed radicalization of the CUP policies. The deportation was first implemented during the war as a regional measure but soon turned into an empire-wide program. The defeats at Sarıkamış and the Suez Canal, the incidents at Zeytun and Dörtyol, landing of the Allied forces at Gallipoli, and the Van uprising as well as the loss of Van became influential in the escalation of the CUP policies. Therefore in analyzing the developments within World War I it is important to evaluate the decision of the CUP government to deport the Armenians. This chapter reconstructs this process in order to present an understanding of the course of events. From this point of view shifting circumstances within the war need to be discussed.

The relations between the CUP and the ARF (Armenian Revolutionary Federation: Dashnaktsutyun) deteriorated prior to the war. While the CUP tried to reach an agreement with the ARF in August 1914 against Russia, the failure of this attempt brought estrangement. Dr. Behaettin Şakir and Naci Bey, as the representatives of the CUP and the government, held a meeting with the ARF leaders in Erzurum in August 1914 during the ARF World Congress. The ARF leaders promised to defend the Ottoman Empire in case of a Russian invasion but did not guarantee the cooperation of Caucasian Armenians in an Ottoman advance on Russia. This reply disappointed Istanbul.¹²

The Russian advance on the eastern borders of the empire and the Ottoman defeat in Sarıkamış by the middle of January 1915 also negatively affected relations, because some Armenians fought on the Russian side. This increased the suspicions about the loyalty of the Armenians. The Russian advance into eastern Anatolia fostered the fear of a Russian-Armenian collaboration that might lead to a secession of eastern provinces from the empire. The situation was not only bad at the eastern border. The military campaign at the Suez Canal also had ended with defeat by the beginning of February. An incident involving Armenian deserters at Zeytun and some local Armenians' assistance to Entente operations on the Mediterranean coast near Dörtyol followed.¹³ In February 1915 the Armenian soldiers in the Ottoman army were disarmed and

placed in labor battalions.¹⁴ Zeytun and Dörtyol were also significant in another respect: fighting there triggered deportations from Dörtyol in March and from Zeytun in April 1915. But these deportations were regionally based at this stage.¹⁵

Even though the deportation was initially a regional measure, it turned to an empire-wide policy within months. The landing of the Anglo-French forces at Gallipoli on April 25, 1915, had already been expected by the CUP when the news of an uprising at Van came on April 20, 1915. The arrests of April 24–25 took place in this context. Moreover, the situation at Van and a Russian advance in eastern Anatolia triggered a deportation decision for Van, Bitlis, and Erzurum provinces on May 9, 1915. A turning point came with the fall of Van to the Russians on May 19, 1915. Armenians continued to hold the city until the arrival of the Russian forces. For the CUP leaders this confirmed their suspicions about Russian-Armenian collaboration. Deportation of Armenians from six provinces (Van; Erzurum; Bitlis; Adana except the cities of Adana, Sis, and Mersin; Maraş sanjak with the exception of Maraş city; and Aleppo) was ordered on May 23 after the fall of Van. 17

In response to this order the Allied countries declared on May 24, 1915, that Ottoman leaders and officials would be held responsible for crimes committed during the mass deportations of the Christian population. This declaration induced the CUP leaders to establish a legal basis for the deportations. On May 27, 1915, the Ottoman government enacted a provisional law for this purpose ("Vakt-1 Seferde İcraat-1 Hükümete Karşı Gelenler İçün Cihet-i Askeriyece İttihaz Olunacak Tedabir Hakkında Kanun-u Muvakkat"). The provisional law gave military commanders the authority to deport the people of a village or town individually or as a whole if they were suspected of spying or treason. Even though it did not refer specifically to Armenians, it was obvious that the law would be used for their deportation. 18

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DEPORTATION ORDER IN KAYSERI

The district of Kayseri neither became a battle area during the war nor was invaded. Therefore the main event that influenced the social and economic structure in the sanjak was the deportation of Armenians. Their deportation transformed both the demographic composition and the socioeconomic life of the city. In order to analyze this process the change in its population during World War I has to be evaluated.

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DISTRICT	Muslims	Greeks	Armenians	Armenian Catholics	Protestants	Total
Kayseri	101,924	19,662	30,105	1,513	1,614	154,818
Develi	30,948	2,085	15,689	2	404	49,128
İncesu	14,559	3,773	_	_	_	18,332
Bünyan-ı Hamid	36,861	1,070	2,865	_	_	40,796
Total: Kayseri sanjak	184,292	26,590	48,659	1,515	2,018	263,074

Table 33.1. Population of Kayseri Sanjak according to the Census of 1914

Source: Karpat, Ottoman Population (1830–1914), 186–87. The population census of the Armenian Patriarchate for February 1913–August 1915 gives more or less the same number (52,000 Armenians) for the Kayseri Armenian population as the Ottoman census results for 1914. Raymond H. Kevorkian and Paul B. Paboudjian, 1915 Öncesinde Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Ermeniler, 62.

According to the census results of 1914, the total population of Kayseri sanjak was 263,074, with 184,292 Muslims, 26,590 Greeks, 48,659 Armenians, 1,515 Catholics, and 2,018 Protestants. In other words the non-Muslims were 30 percent of the total Kayseri population in 1914. These figures drastically changed as a result of the deportation order of the government.

After the explosion of a bomb in the house of an Armenian in Everek in February 1915 a harsh investigation campaign began in Kayseri to detect the Armenian revolutionary communities within the district. ¹⁹ This campaign included a search for arms and the arrest of the leaders of the Armenian organizations and prominent Armenians alleged of being involved in revolt ("Ermeni tertibat-1 ihtilaliyesi"). Messages concerning the existence of Armenian revolutionary committees in Kayseri and information about their weapons became an important topic of official correspondence.²⁰

On April 24, 1915, orders concerning the Armenian Committees such as the Dashnak Party and Hunchak Party were sent to the provinces and district governorates, including Kayseri. The local branches of these committees were to be closed down by order of the Interior Ministry and their files to be seized. Moreover, the leaders and members of the committees and the important and *muzır* (detrimental) Armenians who were known by the government were ordered to be arrested and court-martialed. If necessary people whose residence in their former place was regarded as inconvenient could be interned in a suitable location within the province

or district while their escape was being prevented. Searches for weapons should also be implemented if required.²¹ Searches for weapons and arrest of the Armenian notables and community leaders were carried out in Kayseri during the spring of 1915. At the end of May 1915 the harsh campaign against the Armenians forced the local community leaders to hand over all weapons to the authorities that they had acquired after the 1896 and 1909 Adana incidents.²² But handing over the weapons did not put an end to the operations. Arrest of Armenian notables and leaders who were alleged to be members of the Armenian revolutionary committees followed. As a result many Armenian notables were judged at courtmartial. Some of them were sentenced to death.²³

On June 1, 1915, while searches for arms and arrests continued, the Istanbul government reminded the district governorate of Kayseri (Kayseri Mutasarrıflığı) and other provinces of the implementation of the arrest and deportation order to the leaders of the Armenian Committees and "harmful" Armenians. It warned the local authorities not to send deportees to areas where they would have the same capabilities.²⁴ After this order the deportation of Kayseri Armenians began, with the deportation of Küçük İncesu village in Develi district.²⁵ On June 4, 1915, the district governorate sent a telegram to Istanbul, requesting permission to deport the community of Küçük İncesu because of the existence of a Hunchak branch there. Deportation of this village community to Konya was suggested by the district governorate of Kayseri.26 The next day the Interior Ministry accepted this request and ordered deportation of the whole village to an area that did not have an Armenian population, such as Aksaray in Konya province.²⁷ After the order 160 Armenian families with about 600 people were sent to Aksaray on June 8, 1915.²⁸ Deportation of the Kayseri Armenians gave way to another population movement within the city. After the deportation of the Küçük İncesu villagers the Kayseri governorate immediately demanded settlement of 160 immigrant households in place of the deported Armenian families, with the aim of preventing destruction of the buildings and the harvest. Istanbul agreed on this settlement of immigrants in place of the deportees.²⁹

While the deportation of Kayseri district's Armenians began with the deportation of this village community to Aksaray, Istanbul regarded sending them to an area within the interior of Anatolia as improper at that time. Therefore on June 12, 1915, the Interior Ministry ordered an end to deportation of Armenians from the district, because it would increase the number of Armenians and make them a majority at their destinations.³⁰

This interruption of the deportation did not last long, for the orders continued to come from the center. For example, the entire village of Derevenk, consisting of thirty households, was deported in the middle of July. The district governorate applied to the Interior Ministry to deport the Derevenk villagers, including the women and children. Settlement of Muslim immigrants in their place was proposed by the district governor, Zekai Bey.³¹ This demand was accepted by the ministry, which ordered the deportation of all Derevenk villagers, including women and children.³² The deportation of this village created complications at the level of the local government, however, as the villagers of Derevenk applied for conversion to Islam. The governor of the sanjak hesitated over whether he could deport these Armenians if they converted. Therefore he asked Istanbul for instructions on July 12, 1915.³³ The Interior Ministry ordered him to continue the deportation even if they had converted to Islam.³⁴ This was actually not the first order about converted Armenians. On July 1 the Interior Ministry had addressed this issue. It considered the conversions insincere and unreliable and only a tactic to prevent deportation, so the ministry ordered the deportations to continue, even if the Armenians converted to Islam.35

On August 5, 1915, the deportation of "all Armenians" except for Catholic Armenians to the destination areas was ordered in a cipher telegram. Three other telegrams extended the exceptions to the deportation order on August 15, 1915. Families of soldiers and officers ("asker, zabitan ve sihhiye zabitlerinin aileleri"), those of Armenian deputies, and Protestant Armenians who had not yet been deported were exempted from deportation. The ministry also wanted information about the number of Protestant Armenians who had already been deported and those who remained. According to the missionary reports, these exemptions came too late, as many persons from these groups had already been deported: "Before our wagons were hired, however, an announcement of 'forgiveness' was made, for all Protestants, Catholics, and soldiers' families. This mercy had come too late for most places and the majority of Armenian soldiers of Turkey had already seen their families deported and their houses desolated." According to the families deported and their houses desolated."

Aris Kalfaian, who was deported from Kayseri, acquired a copy of the official deportation announcement that ordered deportation of all Armenians in the district of Kayseri except Catholics. According to the official announcement, all the shops of the deportees would be closed and sealed by the police. The sale and purchase of household commodities were forbidden. The deportees were informed that they could deposit their cash in the bank or transfer it to their relatives. The government also wanted a

list of all movable and unmovable properties of the deportees within ten days as well as a list of their debts.³⁹

The communication between the local governors and the center about the number of deported and remaining Armenians never ceased, and the center regularly received information. According to a telegram from Kayseri (dated September 18, 1915) 49,947 Armenians had lived in Kayseri before the deportation. Of these, 46,463 were Orthodox, 1,517 were Catholics, and 1,967 were Protestants. The governor of Kayseri reported that 44,271 of the district's Armenians had been deported to the provinces of Aleppo, Syria, and Mosul. Among these Armenian deportees, 765 had escaped but had been arrested and redeported by the district governorate of Kayseri. The number of remaining Armenians stood at 4,911. These were Protestants, Catholics, or the families of soldiers and were being distributed to the villages so as not to exceed 5 percent of the villages' population. 40

The deportation of the Armenians stopped with an order from the Interior Ministry in March 1916, which announced that Armenians would not be deported anymore.⁴¹ But this was temporary, because the deportations continued after this date.⁴²

THE DEMOGRAPHY OF KAYSERI AFTER THE DEPORTATION OF THE ARMENIANS

The statistics prepared for Talat Paşa give the total number of deported Armenians for the provinces and district governorates listed in table 33.2 below as 924,158 and the number of deported Kayseri Armenians as 47.617.⁴³

According to a second data set, 6,761 Armenians remained in Kayseri in 1916, with 6,650 natives and 111 outsiders. Another 6,979 Kayseri Armenians lived in other Ottoman provinces.⁴⁴ The total distribution of Kayseri Armenians throughout the empire is shown in table 33.3.

A document from the Ottoman archives confirms that 6,761 Armenians remained in Kayseri. In response to a telegram from the Interior Ministry to the localities about the number of remaining Armenians, 45 a report was prepared by the district governorate of Kayseri, showing that 6,761 Armenians lived in the sanjak of Kayseri by October 1916. The document emphasizes that all remaining Armenians had been converted, so theoretically and religiously speaking no Orthodox, Protestant, or Catholic Armenians remained within the city. But this detailed document still classifies these remaining converted Armenians as a separate category: 634 of these converts were originally Catholic Armenians, 507 were

Table 33.2. The Number of Armenian Deportees in *Talat Paşa'nın Evrak-ı Metrukesi*

PROVINCES AND NUMBER OF DISTRICT GOVERNORATES DEPORTEES Province of Ankara 47,224 Province of Erzurum 128,657 Province of Adana 46,031 Province of Bitlis 109,521 Province of Aleppo 34,451 Province of Hüdavendigar (Bursa) 66,413 Province of Diyarbakır 61,002 Province of Sivas 141,592 Province of Trabzon 34,500 Province of Mamuretülaziz (Elazığ) 74,206 District governorate of İzmit 54,370 District governorate of Canik (Samsun) 26,374 District governorate of Karesi (Balıkesir) 8,290 District governorate of Karahisar (Afyon) 7,327 District governorate of Kayseri 47,617 27,101 District governorate of Maraş District governorate of Nigde 5,101 District governorate of Konya 4,381 924,158 Total

Source: Bardakçı, Talat Paşa'nın Evrak-ı Metrukesi, 77.

Table 33.3. Distribution of Kayseri Armenians

•	
Kayseri	6,650
Adana	539
Ankara	257
Aydın	1,600
Beirut	39
Bolu	3
Eskişehir	8
Aleppo	838
İçel	40
Karesi	1
Konia	16
Mosul	182
Nigde	17
Sivas	113
Syria	2,683
Urfa	580
İzmit	14
Zor	49
Total Kayseri	13,629
Armenians	

Source: Sarafian, Talaat Pasha's Report on the Armenian Genocide, 43.

originally Protestant Armenians, 3,430 were originally native Armenians (Orthodox), 2,060 were members of the Armenian soldiers' families, 15 were outsider Armenians, and 115 Armenians stayed in Kayseri with special permission (see table 33.4).

In the first stage of deportations the Interior Ministry approached the conversion requests of the Armenians as a tactic to prevent deportation and ordered their deportation even if they converted. More than six thousand Armenian converts lived in Kayseri, however, and not all of them were Protestants, Catholics, or families of soldiers. In other words a considerable number of Armenians stayed in the city through conversion to Islam: 3,430 Armenians were not among the exempted groups. Grigoris Balakian, who was deported and passed through Kayseri in 1916,

Table 33.4. Number of Armenian Converts in the Sanjak of Kayseri by October 22, 1916

	AL	73	273	909	166	24	720	51	
	- Total	3,473	27	9	16	1,524	7.	6,761	
THOSE WHO STAYED WITH SPECIAL PERMISSION	WOMEN	I	I	I	l	90	8	53	
THC STAN	MEN		I	I	I	65	8	62	
Originally Outsider Armenians	WOMEN	11	I	I	I	I	I	11	
ORIGI OUT	MEN	4	I	I	I	I	I	4	
FAMILIES OF ARMENIAN SOLDIERS	WOMEN	210	50	150	35	562	257	1,264	
	MEN	90	15	74	15	430	212	962	ayseri-2/.
Originally Armenian Protestants	WOMEN	110	11	33	I	09	30	244	/icerik/1672/k
	MEN	152			I	82	15	263	rsivleri.gov.tr.
Originally Armenian Catholics	WOMEN	se Station 258	Station 9		ا ب <u>م</u>	65	31	357	/www.devleta
	MEN	ıçebaşı Polic 167	ikapı Police 7	as Township —	ere Townsh	82	21	277	74/28: http:/
Originally Armenians	WOMEN	ontrol of Bał 1,351	ontrol of Kiç 105	ontrol of Tals 219	ontrol of Efk 91	.li 78	an 101	1,945	H.EUM.2.şb,
ORIGINALLY	Men Women	Under the Control of Bahçebaşı Police Station 1,160 1,351 167 258	Under the Control of Kiçikapı Police Station 69 105 7 9	Under the Control of Talas Township 122 219 —	Under the Control of Efkere Township 25 91 —	Within Develi 62	Within Bünyan 47	Total 1,485	Source BOA, DH.EUM.2.5b, 74/28: http://www.devletarsivleri.gov.tr/icerik/1672/kayseri-2/

also witnessed that about 10 percent of the Kayseri Armenians remained in the sanjak by converting to Islam.⁴⁷

THE ABANDONED PROPERTIES ISSUE IN KAYSERI

Kayseri is a significant commercial center situated along the east-west caravan route. The Armenian merchants of Kayseri acquired a leading position in the trade of the city. By the nineteenth century the Armenian merchants had expanded their commercial activities and established branches both in other cities of the Ottoman Empire and in commercial hubs abroad. Istanbul and Manchester were the two main centers for their commercial activities. It seems that the Crimean War had been an important juncture in the rise of commercial relations with Europe: many important Armenian merchants of Kayseri opened branches in Manchester after the war. Famous commercial houses were established by these merchants, including the Gulbenkyans, Selians, Frengians, Manugians, Gumushians, and Bashbazirgans. They were involved in the trade of "woolens, silks and other textiles, ready-made clothes, weapons, iron and copper, furs, cutlery, rugs, leather and shoes." Some of these merchants also owned textile-producing mills. Some of these merchants also owned textile-producing mills.

Visiting travelers and British consular representatives confirmed the leading role of the non-Muslim merchants in the foreign trade of Kayseri. While foreign trade was in the hands of Christian merchants, the Muslim merchants generally supplied local demands. The merchants of Kayseri were identified as "middle men engaged in the distributing trade." They acquired the manufactured products in their depots at Kayseri and sent them to international trade centers such as Istanbul or Smyrna (İzmir). In addition to exporting local products the Armenian merchants of Kayseri mostly dealt with dry goods (*manifatura*) and became the preeminent importers of dry goods in the Ottoman market and the distributors of European industrial products in Anatolia. The series of the confidence of the series of the confidence of the

Kayseri was an important trade center before the war and Armenians were a significant element in its active commercial life, so this central role in commercial activities had been a major source of accumulation of wealth by Armenian merchant families.⁵⁴ Hence one of the significant by-products of the deportation process was the emergence of the issue of abandoned properties (*emval-i metruke*). The deported Armenians had to leave behind their wealth in the form of properties. The abandoned properties thus became the subject of a process of redistribution by the authorities. The allocation of these properties was regarded as a

significant subject during this period, because it deeply altered the socioeconomic structure of the country. Abandoned properties also became an important issue because Kayseri was an important mercantile center of the Armenians, who composed 20 percent of the sanjak's total population and actively participated in the commercial sector. Therefore deportation of such a community led to the abandonment of considerable assets and the question of who would acquire them.

According to the regulations for the administration of the deported Armenians' properties, they could not sell or rent them. Thus nearly all Armenian properties were left behind. Special commissions were formed to take control of them. These commissions were supposed to sell the properties and to send the income from such sales to the owner of the property after paying any debt that the owner owed. In practice this process led to the transfer of properties to Muslims at low prices. These properties were important in the formation of national companies and capital accumulation by local Muslim elites. Armenian property not only was a medium for the creation of a national bourgeoisie but was also used for the settlement of Muslim immigrants and thus to finance the government's settlement policy.⁵⁵

A cipher telegram sent to the district governorate of Kayseri on June 28, 1915, ordered that a commission be formed to register and conserve abandoned properties. ⁵⁶ These commissions worked first for the preservation and then for the liquidation of the abandoned properties until May 1916. ⁵⁷ After that date the commissions were brought under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Finance. ⁵⁸ Thirty-four Liquidation Commissions existed by January 1916: in Istanbul, Tekfurdağı, Adana, Cebel-i Bereket, Kozan, Erzurum, Bursa, Gemlik, Bilecik, Yozgat, Ankara, Samsun, Ordu, Trabzon, Sivas, Merzifon, Tokad, İzmit, Adapazarı, Eskişehir, Sivrihisar, Kayseri, Develi, Aleppo, Maraş, Antakya, Bitlis, Diyarbakır, Konya, Mamuretülaziz, Nigde, Karahisar-ı Sahib, Urfa, and Karesi. ⁵⁹ It is remarkable that the Kayseri district had two commissions: the Kayseri and Develi Liquidation Commissions. This demonstrates the significance of Kayseri district as a center of Armenians and the wealth of the Armenian community in the city.

The liquidation of Armenian abandoned properties in Kayseri caused many complaints both inside and outside the country. Foreign nations reacted because Armenians owed debts to citizens of countries like Germany and the United States. For merchants of Kayseri had ties with foreign firms, so the appropriation of some Armenian stores led to requests from these foreign countries to preserve these stores in order to be able to collect debts owed by Armenians. One instance of such a situation

emerged in regard to the Singer Sewing Machine Company of the United States. The American consul of Mersin, Edward I. Nathan, reported the potential damage of the deportations to American companies on July 26, 1915:

Apart from the misery and distress to the deported persons the effect of these measures on the province is incalculable. The loss of the best commercial element and the principal handicraftsmen is bound to injure local economic conditions. Special pleas on this basis have been made to the Government by various interests and even German financial and commercial interests notably those of the various agricultural machine companies which do business as well as the Singer Manufacturing Company and the petroleum companies will also be affected.⁶⁰

When the United States asked the Ottoman government to protect the Singer Sewing Machine stores in Kayseri (whose keys had been delivered to the police department by the deportees), the Interior Ministry instructed the Abandoned Properties Commission of Kayseri to take the required measures for the protection of these stores in order to prevent payment of restitution to the company for the stores (September 16, 1915).⁶¹

A similar request came for the Yosefyan store, which owed a debt to the Deutsche Bank. The Interior Ministry warned the district governorate of Kayseri because it had been reported to the ministry that medical materials and some other equipment had been taken from the store. Due to this situation Istanbul wanted the Kayseri governorate not to take the properties of the Yosefyan store, which was seized by the Deutsche Bank. The document stated that the ministry had promised the bank to preserve the properties of the Yosefyan store, so its properties should not be taken. 62 It is remarkable that this situation was reported to the ministry by the Liquidation Commission of Kayseri, which is a sign of conflict between the district governor and the Liquidation Commission over the use and control of abandoned properties.⁶³ In reply to the warning from the ministry the governorate wrote that the medical materials had been taken from the store because the military urgently needed these materials and that an official record (tekalif-i harbiye mazbatası) would be given in exchange for them. The district governorate also stated that from then on the store would be preserved.⁶⁴

But the correspondence between the ministry and the Kayseri gover-

norate over the Yosefyan store did not end with these telegrams. The local authorities continued to apply to the ministry for the materials in the store, such as sodium carbonate (for the production of soap) and stationery products, on the grounds that the military needed them. The equipment at the store was finally allocated to the military. As this instance shows, Armenian properties were sometimes used to meet the needs of the military. But the military was not the sole institution to take control of the Armenian abandoned properties, which were also confiscated by other state institutions and began to be used as schools, state houses, prisons, and so forth.

When the transfer of Armenian emval-i metruke is examined it becomes clear that these properties were used in strengthening the Muslim bourgeoisie. In this respect the establishment of Muslim companies was encouraged by the authorities. In a telegram dated January 6, 1916, Istanbul ordered the use of Armenian abandoned properties to promote the establishment of Muslim companies. This order emphasized that movable abandoned properties had to be conserved by the authorities because they would be given to the Muslim companies under suitable conditions. The founders, directors, and commercial representatives of these companies would be selected from respectable citizens. In order to secure the participation of merchants and farmers in the establishment of companies, stock certificates (hisse senedati) should cost one lira or half a lira. The certificates had to be registered in the name of these people to prevent the takeover of shares by foreigners. The order specified that this policy was aimed at the growth of commercial life among the Muslims.⁶⁸ It is evident from this order that the abandoned properties became a vehicle to stimulate Muslim establishments within the country. These businesses emerged as a direct result of government policy.

Armenian properties were utilized for the settlement of muhacirs (immigrants) and to meet their needs.⁶⁹ But abandoned properties in Kayseri were used also for Arab families who were deported from Syria, nomadic tribes, and refugees from the eastern border areas, who were sent to Kayseri to be settled in Armenian abandoned properties.⁷⁰ Kayseri was one of the centers for the settlement of Kurdish refugees.⁷¹ The Ottoman government planned to settle the Kurdish refugees in the western provinces. For this purpose it collected information from the provinces and district governorates on the demography of these districts before the implementation of this project. On January 26, 1916, the Interior Ministry asked the provinces of Konya, Kastamonu, Ankara, Sivas, Adana, Aydın, Trabzon, and the district governorates of Kayseri, Canik,

Eskişehir, Karahisar, and Nigde if their districts contained any Kurdish population or Kurdish villages.⁷² On February 10 Kayseri replied that the sanjak had neither a Kurdish population nor Kurdish villages and that the Kurdish refugees could be settled in Kayseri like other immigrants.⁷³ Transfer and settlement of the Kurdish refugees in the sanjak took place in May, June, and July 1916.⁷⁴

Moreover the abandoned properties were used for the settlement of Muslim prisoners of war who accepted Ottoman nationality.⁷⁵ On November 2, 1915, the Interior Ministry asked the provinces and district governorates to report within a week on the number of artisans needed in their districts. The abandoned properties would be distributed to the Muslim prisoners of war in order to fill the economic gap caused by Armenian deportations. The local authorities would supply the production materials to the incoming Muslim prisoners of war, such as shops, capital, and fixed assets, making use of the abandoned property to that end. 76 In response to this telegram the district governorate of Kayseri informed the ministry about the needed artisans: 4 architects, 22 saddlers, 2 lumbermen, 3 pharmacists, 115 ironsmiths, 22 clockmakers, 222 carpenters, 104 stonecutters, 10 yarn dyers, 5 printers, 10 restaurateurs, 20 silversmiths, 12 cutlers, 78 tailors, 107 shoemakers, 10 weavers, 19 blacksmiths, and many other craftsmen. Production materials would be supplied by the governorate.⁷⁷ Only forty-nine Muslim war prisoners were sent to Kayseri, however, and forty-three of them accepted Ottoman nationality. After they settled there capital, fixed assets, and shops were provided to them by the district governorate.⁷⁸

The abandoned properties were also utilized to meet people's essential needs. The Interior Ministry gave permission to auction off the movable abandoned properties, because the appropriation of such goods by the state institutions caused shortages of some essential goods.⁷⁹

DISPUTES OVER EMVAL-I METRUKE

It is evident that the distribution of the Armenian abandoned properties created rising tensions in the socioeconomic realm: a new source of power emerged as a result of deportations. The appropriation of this new source can be evaluated as a new area of struggle or economic battle by appropriating these properties.⁸⁰

Profiteering from the abandoned properties emerged as a problem in Kayseri as a part of this struggle. The sale of Armenian properties by allowing the profiteering of some at the expense of others aroused the reaction of the government that prevention of such unfair profiteering was officially requested by the district governorate. 81 In a document sent from the district governor of Kayseri to the Abandoned Properties Commission about sales at such ridiculous prices, the governor ordered the commission to prohibit such improper transactions (August 26, 1915). This document not only illustrates the sale of abandoned properties at very low prices but also shows the tension between the local governor and the Abandoned Properties Commission: the governor of Kayseri did not view the transactions of the commissions as proper. 82 The correspondence between the Kayseri district governorate and Abandoned Properties Commission continued during August 1915. The governor of Kayseri informed the commission that locals who wanted to own such abandoned properties appealed to the authorities after the deportation of Armenians. While the Abandoned Properties Commission had to carefully scrutinize the transactions, the complaint of the mutasarrıf (district governor) indicated hasty dealings that caused complaints about corruption. In order to prevent such complaints and ensure reliability the governor instructed the commission that the transactions had to be first directed to the governorate of Kayseri and then carried out by the police department in the transfer of the emval-i metruke.⁸³

The failure of the commission in the management of abandoned properties was also reported to Istanbul by the district governor, who stated that the abandoned properties issue was very important in Kayseri but that the locals and officials could not handle these matters quickly and properly. Therefore he requested the appointment of the chair and members of the commission from Istanbul instead of local officials. He criticized the chair and members of the commission because of their mismanagement and incapability, which had led to the corruption of lower-level officials employed at the commission. The mutasarrif wanted Istanbul to appoint a new chair and a new member for the commission who were experienced and efficient. The Interior Ministry did change the chair and commission member and ordered protection of the abandoned properties until the establishment of the Liquidation Commission in line with the law.

In Kayseri even the members of the Liquidation Commission were involved in corruption. Abandoned properties reportedly were found in the houses of Yusuf and Şevki Beys, who were members of the commission. After the investigation by the inspector (*mülkiye müfettişi*) the abandoned properties were restored.⁸⁷ The complaints were not only about the mismanagement of the commission: the district governor

also complained about the other officials. In one of these telegrams he stated that the kadı (Muslim judge) of Bünyan committed misconduct in the deportation of the Armenians and at the procedures regarding abandoned properties. The mutasarrıf asked that he be removed from duty.⁸⁸

It is also understood from the correspondence between the center and Kayseri that abandoned properties triggered controversies among the leading figures in the bureaucracy. One such example occurred between the district governor Zekai Bey and Cemil Bey, the representative of the Committee of Union and Progress in the district (İttihat Terakki murahhasi), and Col. Şahab Bey, the commander of the military forces in the district. The members of secondary (tali) commissions were appointed by the locality before the establishment of the Abandoned Properties Commission in Kayseri. Cemil Bey and Şahab Bey had been employed at these commissions. The district governor complained, however, that while they had to perform their duties on the Abandoned Properties Commission after its establishment they continued to be employed at the tali commissions because the new chair of the Abandoned Properties Commission would not dismiss them. District governor Zekai highlighted that the chair of the commission was repeatedly told to dismiss them, but the commission continued to employ them. This refusal to end their duties led to misconduct within the commission.⁸⁹ Mutasarrıf Zekai accused Cemil and Şahab of corruption and requested their removal from their duties at the Abandoned Properties Commission. The telegram shows that Cemil and Şahab were employed at the commissions in an improper way. As a result of Zekai's complaints the Interior Ministry ordered their removal and also changed the chair and members of the commission (December 7, 1915).90 Ahmet Rıfat Çalıka, who was the mayor of Kayseri during the war, also mentions the controversy between the mutasarrıf and Colonel Şahab.⁹¹

But this change in the administration of the commission did not end the problems. Auction of some Armenian properties took place in January and February 1916. These auctions continued to produce complaints because of obvious corruption. One of these complaints from Kayseri clearly illustrates the situation. According to the telegram in question, a Muslim company that was established hastily had bought the goods of an Armenian store for 2,000 liras. It then sold them within two days for 10,000 liras. This type of rapid enrichment through abandoned properties was criticized by the center. The ministry highlighted that even this single event was enough to show that the auction of the abandoned

properties was not implemented in the correct legal way in Kayseri. It emphasized that the aim of the establishment of Muslim companies was to encourage Muslims to trade and to develop Muslim institutions within the country. Thus the Muslim companies had to be supported as much as possible, but always in accordance with the law and regulations. The abandoned properties had to be sold through auctions in which people could participate instead of selling these properties wholesale and at very cheap prices (February 8, 1916). ⁹⁴ In other telegrams the Interior Ministry continued to warn the Kayseri district governorate and the Kayseri Liquidation Commission against such illegal enrichment through abandoned properties. ⁹⁵

Complaints came from the people of Kayseri targeting the "war profiteers" (harp zenginleri) who took advantage of the abandoned properties. Many documents regarding these war profiteers and their misappropriations of the abandoned properties exist. They demonstrate that notables of the city, officials, and members of the Abandoned Properties Commission took part in this process.⁹⁶ These documents and the memoirs of mayor Ahmet Çalıka show that the city notables and officials collaborated to acquire abandoned properties and that a group of war profiteers emerged among them. Çalıka cites the profiteering allegations against some local notables and officials. According to him, chief clerk (tahrirat müdürü) Sabri, head clerk of the city commission Nurullah, and local notables İmamzade Reşit, Hayrullah, Taşçızade Ömer and his brothers Mehmet and Hüseyin, Karabeyzade Mustafa, Kürkçüzade Ömer, and Germirli Ali Efendi collaborated to decrease the price of the abandoned properties by manipulation instead of open market sale and bought these properties at cheaper prices. The accusation was dropped due to the statute of limitations and therefore was not brought before the court. Prosecutor Ziya Tevfik, the head of the Kayseri Court-Martial, and Halim, the chair of the Abandoned Properties Commission, were accused of purchasing commodities (abandoned properties) given on commission to them by abusing their positions. Again this accusation was dropped due to the statute of limitations and was not brought before the court. The allegations of corruption also show that local notable Katipzade Nuh Naci, tradesmen Hacı Kamil and Bıçakçıoğlu Mehmet, and police officer Ahmet collaborated to appropriate the commodities of the Yazıcıyan store.⁹⁷ The Ottoman archive confirms Çalıka's memoirs, with complaints about the corruption of above-mentioned local figures: Nuh Naci Bey, Kürkçüzade Ömer, and Nurullah, the head clerk of the city commission.98

CONCLUSION

The deportation process and the struggle over abandoned properties in Kayseri district illustrate how local activities shaped the issue of appropriation of the Armenian abandoned properties. The interaction among different social actors in the localities is a key element in understanding the distribution process of the emval-i metruke. As the regulations regarding the abandoned properties indicate, the state tried to take control of the distribution process. ⁹⁹ But the socioeconomic structure of the localities and the way in which local actors functioned did affect the implementation of this policy. In this respect the relationship between the local notables and local officials, who were responsible for the implementation of the regulations, should be researched and analyzed as a significant element affecting the application of the central government policies. ¹⁰⁰

Archival data and memoirs demonstrate that the deportation of Armenians had a significant impact on Kayseri. First, the city was deprived of an important source of labor. Armenians were influential in the commercial and economic production activities in Kayseri, so their absence created a vacuum that was filled by Muslim entrepreneurs. The Armenian shops and properties were sold to them at extremely cheap prices. Thus the emval-i metruke played a role in the process of the nationalization of the economy. It also created a struggle over the appropriation of the abandoned properties. City notables, officials, and military officers were involved in a controversial scheme involving the auction of these properties. The distribution process aroused many complaints because of the enrichment of some at the expense of others. The documents indicate that these war profiteers were accused but not tried in court. As a result a new entrepreneur class emerged in Kayseri. 101 Many of these figures became the leaders of the Turkish national resistance movement and of the republican era. 102 The Armenian deportation catapulted the creation of a new bourgeoisie and the emergence of a new upper class in Kayseri. In that respect this process had deep implications for the shaping of the property rights and relations in the district.

NOTES

- 28 Teşrin-i Evvel 1927 Umuni Nüfus Tahriri Fasikül III, 8, 30; Kemal H. Karpat, Ottoman Population (1830–1914), 168–69; Çağlar Keyder, State and Class in Turkey, 67–69, 79–91; Erik J. Zürcher, Modernleşen Türkiye'nin Tarihi, 239–41.
- 2. "In the peace settlement of 1913 eighty percent of the European territory of the Empire was lost, with 4.2 million inhabitants (about 16 percent of the total

- population of the Empire)." Erik J. Zürcher, "The Late Ottoman Empire as Laboratory of Demographic Engineering," 6.
- Erik J. Zürcher, "The Young Turks—Children of the Borderlands?" Zürcher gives
 details about the geographical origins of the CUP Central Committee (Merkez-i
 Umumi) members.
- 4. Erol Ülker, "Contextualizing 'Turkification," 615–26; Zürcher, "The Late Ottoman Empire as Laboratory of Demographic Engineering," 6–7. David Kushner evaluates the rise of Turkish nationalism during Abdülhamid's reign and notes that Anatolia began to be called the Turkish homeland in this period. Therefore it can be said that the pioneering ideas in this respect have their roots before the Balkan Wars. David Kushner, *Türk Milliyetçiliğinin Doğuşu*, 95–99.
- 5. M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, "Turkism and the Young Turks, 1889–1908," 19.
- 6. For instances of such an approach, see Fuat Dündar, İttihat ve Terakki'nin Müslümanları İskan Politikası (1913–1918); Nesim Şeker, "Demographic Engineering in the Late Ottoman Empire and the Armenians"; Fikret Adanır and Hilmar Kaiser, "Göç, Sürgün ve Ulusun İnşası"; Taner Akçam, "Ermeni Meselesi Hallolunmuştur"; Fuat Dündar, Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi; Ülker, "Contextualizing 'Turkification'"; Zürcher, "The Late Ottoman Empire as Laboratory of Demographic Engineering"; Uğur Ümit Üngör, "Seeing Like a Nation-State."
- Justin McCarthy, The Ottoman Peoples and the End of Empire, 90–94; İlhan Tekeli, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'ndan Günümüze Nüfusun Zorunlu Yer Değiştirmesi ve İskan Sorunu," 60; Onur Yıldırım, Türk-Yunan Mübadelesinin Öteki Yüzü, 38.
- 8. Zürcher, "The Late Ottoman Empire as Laboratory of Demographic Engineering," 6–9; Yıldırım, *Türk-Yunan Mübadelesinin Öteki Yüzü*, 39; Akçam, "*Ermeni Meselesi Hallolunmuştur*," 83–95.
- 9. Dündar, İttihat ve Terakki'nin Müslümanları İskan Politikası, 11.
- 10. In recent years the new topic of abandoned properties has begun to attract the interest of scholars. The pioneering studies focused on the central government orders and the legal framework for the abandoned properties: Hilmar Kaiser, "Armenian Property, Ottoman Law and Nationality Policies during the Armenian Genocide, 1915–1916," 49–71; Salahaddin Kardeş, *Tehcir ve Emval-i Metruke Mevzuatı*; Nevzat Onaran, Emval-i Metruke Olayı; Uğur Ümit Üngör and Mehmet Polatel, Confiscation and Destruction; Taner Akçam and Ümit Kurt, Kanunların Ruhu; Sait Çetinoğlu, "Diyarbakır'da Ermeni Mallarını Kim Aldı?"; Mehmet Polatel, "Diyarbakır'ın Sosyo-Ekonomik Dönüşümünde Ermeni Mallarının Rolü." In addition to these studies, there is also a critical review by Taner Akçam regarding Üngör and Polatel's Confiscation and Destruction and the authors' reply to this critical review: Taner Akçam, "Uğur Ümit Üngör ve Mehmet Polatel: El Koyma ve Yıkım, Genç Türklerin Ermeni Mallarını Gasp Etmesi Kitabı Üzerine"; and Uğur Ümit Üngör and Mehmet Polatel, "Taner Akçam'ın Eleştirilerine Dair." In October 2013 Onaran published a revised version of his book (Emval-i Metruke Olayı) in two volumes: Nevzat Onaran, Osmanlı'da Ermeni ve Rum Mallarının Türkleştirilmesi (1914–1919), and Cumhuriyet'te Ermeni ve Rum Mallarının Türkleştirilmesi (1920–1930).
- 11. Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide*, 69–71, 83–90.

- 12. Dikran M. Kaligian, "The Armenian Revolutionary Federation under Ottoman Constitutional Rule, 1908–1914," 343–47; Hilmar Kaiser, "Regional Resistance to Central Government Policies," 176, 211.
- 13. Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide*, 4, 70–91; Fuat Dündar, *Crime of Numbers*, 70–73; Zürcher, "The Late Ottoman Empire as Laboratory of Demographic Engineering," 8–9.
- 14. "Ermeni efrad gerek seyyar ordularda ve gerek ordularda ve gerek seyyar ve sabit jandarmalarda katiyen hidemat-1 müsellahada kullanılmayacaktır ve Kumandanlar ve Karargahın maiyet ve dairelerinde dahi istihdam olunmayacaktır" (Armenians shall strictly not be employed in mobile armies, in mobile and stationary gendarmeries, or in any armed services. They shall not be employed even in the suites and offices of the Commandants and the Headquarters). General Staff Archive, February 25, 1915, Genelkurmay (General Staff), No. 1/131, KLS 2287, File 12, F. 9; quoted in Kamuran Gürün, *Ermeni Dosyası*, 212.
- 15. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 50/141; BOA, DH.EUM.2.Şb, 68/35, in Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermenilerin Sevk ve İskanı, 111, 121–22; BOA, DH.ŞFR 52/51, Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler (1915–1920), 21. For a detailed analysis of the Zeytun affair, see Kaiser, "Regional Resistance to Central Government Policies," 176–82.
- Bloxham, The Great Game of Genocide, 70-71, 83-85; Dündar, Crime of Numbers, 74-95; Zürcher, "The Late Ottoman Empire as Laboratory of Demographic Engineering," 8-9.
- 17. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 53/91; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 53/92; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 53/93; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 53/94.
- 18. Kaiser, "Armenian Property, Ottoman Law and Nationality Policies," 54–55. For the original text and transcription of the provisional law of deportation, see Kardes, *Tehcir ve Emval-i Metruke Mevzuati*, 17–20.
- 19. "NARA, RG 256, Special Reports and Studies, Inquiry Document 824," in James L. Barton, "Turkish Atrocities," 131–32; NARA, RG 59, 867.4016/95.
- 20. BOA, DH.EUM.2.Şb, 6/1; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 50/127; BOA, DH.EUM.2.Şb, 7/21, in *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermenilerin Sevk ve İskanı*, 110–11, 123, 141–50. A document dated September 18, 1915, gave the list of the weapons collected from the Armenians: BOA, DH.EUM.2.Şb, 11/48, in *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermenilerin Sevk ve İskanı*, 258–59.
- 21. "[K]omiteler rüesa ve erkanından müteşebbis eşhas ile hükümetçe tanınan mühim ve muzır Ermenilerin hemen tevkifi." BOA, DH.ŞFR, 52/96, in *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermenilerin Sevk ve İskanı*, 125–26.
- 22. Kayseri Armenians became one of the targets of massacres in 1894–96. In November 1895 several hundred Armenians were killed in Kayseri. Rev. Edwin Munsell Bliss, Turkey and the Armenian Atrocities, 469–70; Stephen G. Svajian, A Trip through Historic Armenia, 346–52; Turkey, No. 2 (1896), 261.
- 23. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 54/64; BOA, DH.EUM.2.Şb, 8/37; BOA, DH.EUM.2.Şb, 10/58; BOA, DH.EUM.2.Şb, 11/48, in *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermenilerin Sevk ve İskanı*, 170, 173, 230–32, 258–59. Studies built on the memoirs of the Kayseri Armenians who experienced this process of searches, arrests, and executions highlight the fierceness of the authorities. For detailed information on this process, see Raymond Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide*, 513–22; Vahakn N. Dadrian,

"The Agency of 'Triggering Mechanisms' as a Factor in the Organization of the Genocide against the Armenians of Kayseri District," 107–6; Aris Kalfaian, *Chomaklou*, 101–39. In addition to these sources, the American missionary reports have detailed information on this investigation campaign. See NARA, RG 256, 867B.00/31; NARA, RG 256, 867B.00/32; NARA, RG 59, 867.4016/158; NARA, RG 59, 867.4016/95; NARA, RG 59, 867.4016/190; "NARA, RG 256, Special Reports and Studies, Inquiry Document 824," in Barton, "*Turkish Atrocities*," 132–33; "Story of the Girls of the Talas Girls' School in the Year of the Deportation," American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Harvard University, Houghton Library (hereafter ABCFM), reel 629.

- 24. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 53/201, in Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermenilerin Sevk ve İskanı, 158.
- 25. NARA, RG 59, 867.4016/95.
- 26. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 473/133.
- 27. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 53/246.
- 28. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 474/110; BOA, DH.EUM.2.Şb, 68/36, in *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermenilerin Sevk ve İskanı*, 162.
- 29. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 476/50; BOA, DH.EUM.2.Şb, 8/21.
- 30. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 53/326, in Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermenilerin Sevk ve İskanı, 164.
- 31. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 479/26; "NARA, RG 256, Special Reports and Studies, Inquiry Document 807," in Barton, "*Turkish Atrocities*," 122.
- 32. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 54/380.
- 33. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 479/100.
- 34. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 54/427, in Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermenilerin Sevk ve İskanı, 198: "Ermenilerin ihtidası sırf ilca-yı menfaat ile olduğu için ihtidaları üzerine tebidleri tehir edilmeyecektir" (Since the Armenians convert only for the sake of their interest, their deportation would not be postponed in case of conversion).
- 35. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 54/254.
- 36. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 54-A/276.
- 37. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 55/18; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 55/19; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 55/20, in Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermenilerin Sevk ve İskanı, 214–15.
- 38. ABCFM, reel 629. According to the Ottoman census results, 2,018 Protestants and 1,515 Catholics lived in Kayseri before the deportation. While the number of Catholics decreased to 634, the number of Protestants was 507 by 1916. Therefore it can be said that many of the Protestants and Catholics had been deported despite (or before) the exemption order of the government. BOA, DH.EUM.2.Şb, 74/28; Karpat, Ottoman Population (1830–1914), 186–87.
- 39. Kalfaian, Chomaklou,144-46.
- BOA, DH.EUM.2.Şb, 68/75, in Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermenilerin Sevk ve İskanı,
 260.
- 41. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 62/21, in *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermenilerin Sevk ve İskanı*, 357: "Görülen lüzum ve icab-ı idari ve askeriye binaen badema Ermeni sevkiyatının tatili takarrur ettiğinden şimdiye kadar çıkarılanlardan başka artık hiçbir sebep ve vesile ile Ermeni ihraç olunmaması tamimen tebliğ olunur" (The suspension of the Armenian deportation has been decided due to administrative and military requirements. It is notified that no Armenian, apart from those already deported, will be deported for any reason from now on).

- 42. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 65/51; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 65/176; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 69/260; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 69/262; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 70/6; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 70/92.
- 43. This report was found in the private archives of Talat Paşa and given to Murat Bardakçı by Talat Paşa's wife in 1982. Bardakçı transcribed and published the original report by attaching it to the book. It has to be stated that this report was not written by Talat Paşa but prepared for him, probably by the Directorate for the Settlement of Tribes and Immigrants (İskan-1 Aşair ve Muhacirin Müdüriyeti). Murat Bardakçı, *Talat Paşa'nın Evrak-1 Metrukesi*, 11–13. Ara Sarafian's book evaluates the data in *Talat Paşa'nın Evrak-1 Metrukesi* and compares them with the documents from the Interior Ministry classification in the Ottoman Archives. Sarafian indicates that the numbers regarding the remaining and deported Armenians in the Ottoman archive documents were close. This comparison shows that this report was based on the data derived from the documents in the Interior Ministry classification. Ara Sarafian, *Talaat Pasha's Report on the Armenian Genocide*, 6–9.

Sarafian highlights that the number of total deported Armenians in *Talat Paṣa'nın Evrak-1 Metrukesi* is not correct: "The total number of deported Armenians is given as 924,158, a figure simply reflecting the number of Apostolic (or Gregorian) Armenians in these provinces according to official Ottoman statistics for 1914. The list does not include the European provinces of the Ottoman Empire, nor Kutahya or Van. It also does not mention the deportation of Catholic and Protestant Armenians": Sarafian, *Talaat Pasha's Report on the Armenian Genocide*, 67–68. Table 33.2 contains no data for Istanbul, Edirne, Urfa, Menteşe, Van, Teke, Kale-i Sultaniye, Eskişehir, Bolu, İçel, Kastamonu, Kütahya, or Aydın.

- 44. Bardakçı, *Talat Paşa'nın Evrak-ı Metrukesi*, 117. Three of the outsider Armenians in Kayseri were from Istanbul, eighty-seven were from Ankara, and twenty-one were from Sivas. Even though the report prepared for Talat Paşa has no date, this information was reported by Kayseri to the Interior Ministry in October 1916. The 111 outsider Armenians were reported from Kayseri to the ministry in February 1917 (BOA, DH.EUM.2.Şb, 34/12; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 546/97).
- 45. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 68/112 (September 24, 1916). This telegram asked for detailed information about the remaining Armenians by classifying them as natives, outsiders, Catholics, Protestants, families of soldiers, people who remained as a result of conversion, and people who remained due to special permission.
- 46. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 54/254; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 479/100 (July 12, 1915); BOA, DH.ŞFR, 54/427.
- 47. Grigoris Balakian, Armenian Golgotha, 179–80.
- 48. Noting the many important merchants among the Armenians of Kayseri does not indicate an ethnic division of labor in Kayseri, such as equating Armenians with merchandise and Turks with agriculture. Kayseri also had an important village community of Armenians. Many Muslim merchants lived in the sanjak, and the Muslim villagers were also involved in activities apart from agriculture, such as carpet making. Stating that the Armenian community of Kayseri was a significant part of the sanjak's economy does not mean ignoring the Muslim merchants or artisans. But it is beyond the scope of this study to evaluate these subjects.
- 49. K. S. Papazian, Merchants from Ararat, 46-48; Arşak Alboyaciyan, Badmootiun

- *Hye Gesaria*, 1478–80 (related parts of this book were translated from Armenian to Turkish by Can Erzurumluoğlu).
- Papazian, Merchants from Ararat, 47 (quotation); Bedross Der Matossian, "The Armenian Commercial Houses and Merchant Networks in the 19th Century Ottoman Empire," 157.
- 51. Henry Algernon George Percy, *Highlands of Asiatic Turkey*, 74; "General Report by Lieutenant Bennet on the Sandjak of Kaisarieh," in *Turkey*, *No. 6 (1881)*, 268.
- 52. Percy, *Highlands of Asiatic Turkey*, 75 (quotation); Ali Tuzcu, "19. Yüzyılın Başlarından 20. Yüzyılın İlk Çeyreğine Seyyahların Gözüyle ve Konsolosluk Raporlarında Kayseri'nin İktisadi Yapısı," 542; William Francis Ainsworth, *Travels and Researches in Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, Chaldea, and Armenia*, 263, 267.
- 53. Alboyaciyan, *Badmootiun Hye Gesaria*, 1478–80. The superior position of the Armenians and Greeks in the dry goods trade led to a Muslim company being formed to compete in the dry goods trade against them: Ahmet Hilmi Kalaç, *Kendi Kitabım*, 62–63.
- 54. For information on these families and their commercial activities, see Papazian, *Merchants from Ararat*, 47–49; and Alboyaciyan, *Badmootiun Hye Gesaria*, 1478–80.
- 55. Adanır and Kaiser, "Göç, Sürgün ve Ulusun İnşası," 24-25.
- 56. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 54/226, in Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermenilerin Sevk ve İskanı, 179.
- 57. Abandoned Properties Commissions turned to Liquidation Commissions with the law of September 26, 1915 ("14 Mayıs 1331 Tarihli kanun-1 muvakkat mucibince aher mahallere nakil edilen eşhasın emval ve düyun ve matlubat-1 metrukesi hakkında kanun-u muvakkat" [Provisional Law concerning the Abandoned Properties, Debits, and Credits of the Individuals Who Were Deported in Accordance with the Provisional Law dated May 27, 1915]). For the text of the law, see Onaran, *Emval-i Metruke Olayı*, 319–22.
- 58. BOA, HR.SYS, 2873/3_35, in Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermenilerin Sevk ve İskanı, 368.
- 59. BOA, DH.EUM.MEM, 73/43. BOA, DH.MB.HPS, 156/89, and BOA, DH.HMŞ, 12/81 give the same list of the commissions. In another document sent to the Liquidation Commissions from the Interior Ministry, thirty-two commissions were recorded: Tekfurdağı, Adana, Cebel-i Bereket, Kozan, Yozgat, Ankara, Erzurum, Bitlis, Haleb, Maraş, Antakya, Hüdavendigar, Gemlik, Bilecik, Diyarbakır, Sivas, Merzifon, Tokad, Samsun, Ordu, Trabzon, Konya, Mamuretülaziz, İzmit, Adapazarı, Eskişehir, Sivrihisar, Kayseri, Develi, Nigde, Karahisar-ı Sahib, Urfa: Liquidation Commissions, BOA, DH.ŞFR, 59/239.
- 60. Library of Congress, Papers of Henry Morgenthau, reel 7, no. 464. Another example of such a situation emerged in regard to life insurance. American ambassador Henry Morgenthau narrates a conversation between him and the minister of the interior, Talat Paşa, about the life insurance of deported Armenians from American companies such as the New York Life Insurance Company and Equitable Life of New York. According to him, Talat Paşa demanded the list of the Armenian policy holders and wanted their life insurance paid to the Ottoman government, for many of them had lost their lives. Morgenthau rejected this demand. Henry Morgenthau, Ambassador Morgenthau's Story, 233.

- 61. Kalfaian, Chomaklou, 167.
- 62. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 64/10 (May 14, 1916).
- 63. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 519/67 (May 12, 1916).
- 64. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 520/43 (May 18, 1916).
- 65. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 527/69; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 530/15; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 532/88.
- 66. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 55/210; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 519/67; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 520/43; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 527/69; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 530/15; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 532/88; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 54-A/319. These documents illustrate that the military appropriated some materials from the Armenian stores, such as medical items, medicines, chemicals (in order to produce soap), yarn, stationery products, and cotton. Aris Kalfaian also attached documents about the use of the abandoned properties by the military. Kalfaian, *Chomaklou*, 151, 155, 157.
- 67. Kalfaian, *Chomaklou*, 169; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 54/101; BOA, DH.İ.UM.EK, 50/45; BOA, DH.MB.HPS, 49/30; BOA, DH.UMVM, 104/42.
- 68. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 59/239.
- 69. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 55/256; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 481/9; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 481/49.
- 70. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 59/107; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 487/42.
- 71. For detailed information on the settlement of the Kurdish refugees in the western part of Anatolia, see Dündar, *Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi*, 409–18.
- 72. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 60/140 (January 26, 1916).
- 73. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 508/95.
- BOA, DH.ŞFR, 518/86; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 64/93; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 519/98; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 521/50; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 522/83; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 522/101; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 523/116.
- 75. Hundreds of thousands of Russian soldiers fighting against Germany were taken prisoner during the war, including a considerable number of Muslim soldiers. The Muslim prisoners of war in the German, Austrian, and Romanian prison camps were sent to the Ottoman Empire to be settled in Anatolia. In addition, Muslim prisoners of war captured in Bitlis and Kut'ülamare were settled in the Ottoman lands after their acceptance of Ottoman citizenship. Nedim İpek, İmparatorluktan Ulus Devlete Göçler, 262–63.
- 76. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 57/261.
- 77. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 496/119.
- 78. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 518/30.
- 79. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 55/330.
- 80. Joel Migdal, "The State in Society," 22.
- 81. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 54-A/383.
- 82. Kalfaian, *Chomaklou*, 157: "It has been noted that such articles as wood, coal, copper, and cotton goods left by Armenian deportees, are already on sale here and there for ridiculous sums. Therefore strictly prohibit such transactions, and gathering the articles in depots, register them and place under guard, or send them to military requisition depots. It is especially imperative that copper in any form be taken over by the Military Requisitions, and that commerce in such articles be prohibited immediately, and after ascertaining where and in what quantities they are available, the account be submitted to us."
- 83. Ibid., 159.

- 84. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 489/25.
- 85. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 498/103.
- 86. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 58/220 (December 7, 1915).
- 87. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 531/74; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 532/87.
- 88. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 490/102.
- 89. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 498/103 (November 25, 1915); BOA, DH.ŞFR, 499/59 (November 30, 1915).
- 90. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 58/220.
- 91. Hurşit Çalıka, ed., Kurtuluş Savaşında Adalet Bakanı Ahmet Rıfat Çalıka'nın Anıları, 20–21.
- 92. BOA, DH.ŞFR. 504/33; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 505/86; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 505/89; BOA, DH.ŞFR 60/95.
- 93. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 507/125.
- 94. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 60/275.
- 95. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 61/31; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 61/37.
- BOA, DH.ŞFR, 531/74; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 532/87; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 535/72; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 626/133.
- 97. Çalıka, Kurtuluş Savaşında Adalet Bakanı Ahmet Rıfat Çalıka'nın Anıları, 34–35.
- 98. BOA, DH.ŞFR, 626/54; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 626/133; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 626/154; BOA, DH.ŞFR, 627/7; BOA, DH.KMS, 51-1/66.
- 99. For detailed information on the regulations regarding Armenian abandoned properties, see Kaiser, "Armenian Property, Ottoman Law and Nationality Policies," 49–71; Onaran, *Emval-i Metruke Olayı*; Kardeş, *Tehcir ve Emval-i Metruke Mevzuatı*.
- 100. As Migdal has emphasized: "Rarely can any social force achieve its goal without finding allies, creating coalitions, and accepting accommodations": Migdal, "The State in Society," 21.
- 101. Aslı Emine Çomu evaluates the critical role of the local notables and merchants of Kayseri, who had settled in Adana after World War I and became the leading people in the economic life of the city as the entrepreneurs of the new regime. She especially emphasizes Nuh Naci Yazgan: "Some of these immigrants from Kayseri actively participated [in] the efforts of the Turkish state considering the formation of a Turkish and Muslim entrepreneur class.... Nuh Naci (Yazgan), an Anatolian businessman who attended the Sivas Congress as delegate for Kayseri, was one of the candidates of the Turkish state considering the transfer of the abandoned estates to Turkish businessmen. He was given the duty of the reestablishment of the factory that was formerly known as Simyonoğlu Factory": Aslı Emine Çomu, "The Impact of the Exchange of Populations on the Economic and Social Life of the City of Adana (1875–1927)," 96–97.
- 102. Ahmet Hilmi Kalaç and Ahmet Rıfat Çalıka tell about the period of national resistance and the beginning of the Republic. They refer to some of the local notables and officials mentioned above and describe them as the leading people of the national resistance: Kalaç, *Kendi Kitabım*, 144–59; Çalıka, *Kurtuluş Savaşında Adalet Bakanı Ahmet Rıfat Çalıka'nın Anıları*, 36–60.

Getting Away with Murder

Soghomon Tehlirian, ASALA, and the Justice Commandos, 1921–1984

Christopher Gunn

Since the end of World War I Armenians have sought justice for their interpretation of the events in eastern Anatolia in 1915. Although this quest has largely been attempted through peaceful, academic, and legislative means, it has twice turned to violence. Between March 1921 and April 1922 Armenians operating in Istanbul, Berlin, Rome, Tbilisi, and Istanbul assassinated Talat Paşa and Cemal Paşa, along with other prominent Ottoman officials and Armenian traitors, who were held personally accountable for the organization and implementation of the massacres. This operation, known as Nemesis, was orchestrated by members of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation in the United States. Fifty years later the violence began again. This time, however, it was aimed at collectively punishing Turkish citizens, institutions, and interests. Between 1973 and 1984 approximately seventy individuals were murdered, including thirtyone Turkish diplomats and their immediate family members. Over five hundred were wounded by two Armenian terrorist organizations, the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA) and the Justice Commandos of the Armenian Genocide (JCAG).

This chapter explores the links between these two periods of violence. The acquittal of Soghomon Tehlirian in the assassination of Talat was primarily a result of the anti-Turkish and anti-Talat propaganda in the West. Tehlirian's court testimony sustained a culture of violence within the Armenian diaspora that tragically culminated in a double homicide in January 1973. These murders in turn facilitated an Armenian terrorist campaign that lasted through the early 1990s. Although it was fifty years and three generations removed from the events of 1915, the precedent

set by Tehlirian's acquittal was again used to justify the violence. The tragic irony in all of this, however, is that Tehlirian's legend is based on fiction, not fact. His acquittal was obtained through a well-coached and fabricated defense. These details were and are still largely left out when Tehlirian's tale is told.

INTRODUCTION

The coverage of Nemesis and contemporary Armenian terrorism and of the Armenian diaspora's activities in the twentieth century varies considerably in the more general histories and analyses of eastern Anatolia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Furthermore, any connections between the two are left unexplored. By comparison the scholarly works on contemporary Armenian terrorism all introduce their analyses of ASALA and the Justice Commandos with a discussion of the ARF's operation Nemesis. These explorations are brief, however, and the links established are shallow. The exception is Michael Gunter's observation that the acquittal of the Nemesis agents who had been captured after the assassinations was being used by ASALA and Justice Commandos as "moral justification" for their attacks on Turkish diplomats.

The similarities between the two periods of organized Armenian violence against Turkey and Turkish nationals are numerous. Most obviously they involved the assassination of Ottoman and Turkish government officials by ethnic Armenians seeking revenge for the massacres of 1915. This was clearly the motive behind the Nemesis murders and, despite their claims to their contrary, was the motive most frequently referenced in media reports covering the ASALA and Justice Commandos attacks. The groups had no problem using murder to achieve their aims and felt completely justified in doing so. Now that it is known that the Justice Commandos were the armed wing of the ARF, it is clear that the ARF was actively involved in both periods of violence. The agents of Nemesis, ASALA, and JCAG operated virtually unhindered in Western Europe, the Middle East, and North America at a time when the Western public's regard for the Ottomans and Turkey was extremely low: Nemesis in the wake of World War I and the lingering effects of wartime propaganda and ASALA/JCAG in the midst of the Cyprus crisis, the U.S. arms embargo, concerns over poppy production, and allegations of human rights abuses.

The attacks enjoyed relatively sympathetic media coverage in the West, particularly in the Armenian American press. This was arguably a product of both sympathy for the Armenian cause and the negative perception of the Ottoman Empire and Turkey, although it is difficult to determine which one influenced the other. The few operatives who were actually caught received shockingly favorable treatment by the courts, with one exception. Finally, the individuals involved in the attacks of both periods have been honored, idolized, and lauded as heroes, avengers, and defenders of the Armenian cause within the Armenian community itself. Public memorials to the two most infamous assassins of their respective periods have even been built. Soghomon Tehlirian, the man who shot and killed Talat, has a monument in Fresno, California. Monte Melkonian has one in Yerevan, Armenia, although it is ostensibly meant to honor his role in the defense of Nagorno-Karabakh and not his role in the murders of Galip Özmen and his fourteen-year-old daughter in Athens, Greece, in July 1980 or his role in ASALA.

The differences between the two periods of violence, while fewer in number, are significant. The ARF agents involved in the assassinations of the leaders of the Committee of Union and Progress most likely had an easier time rationalizing murder. At a minimum they were at least contemporaries of the events that they were avenging. Most had lost family members or friends during the war. The only two that were captured, Soghomon Tehlirian and Missak Torlakian, were acquitted of their crimes primarily because they claimed to have personally witnessed the gruesome murders of their own families. It was also undoubtedly easier for them to convince themselves of the righteousness of their cause, given the Allied proclamation in May 1915 to hold the leaders of the Ottoman Empire accountable for their crimes and the death sentences handed down to Talat, Cemal, and Enver by the Ottoman courts in 1919. To Tehlirian and Torlakian it seemed that they were merely fulfilling the promises and desires of the Allied and Ottoman governments, which no longer had the resolve to enforce their will. In their own minds they never committed any indiscriminate acts of violence. They were targeting marked men, not randomly murdering any Turkish official or civilian that crossed their path, and no innocent bystanders were ever struck. If not for the collapse of the Armenian Republic, its subsequent incorporation into the Soviet Union, and the effect that this had on the leadership and cohesion of the diaspora Nemesis might well have continued indefinitely. As it was, however, Nemesis operated for thirteen months and killed at least ten individuals: seven Turks, one Azeri, and at least two Armenian traitors.

By comparison, the majority of the agents in ASALA and the Justice Commandos were three generations removed from the events of 1915, and so were their victims. While certainly exposed to the discussions and memories of their grandparents, these terrorists had no firsthand experience with the war. Nor did ASALA or the Justice Commandos possess a mandate, however ill conceived, to execute the men held responsible for the Armenian massacres. Not only had those men already been murdered, but the Treaty of Lausanne had already settled the Armenian Question in 1923 as far as the international community was concerned. Whereas Nemesis attacked former leaders of the Ottoman Empire, ASALA and the Justice Commandos targeted diplomats and civilians of the Turkish Republic.

The aims of these new terrorists ostensibly were to force the Turkish government to acknowledge that the ethnic conflict in eastern Anatolia in 1915 was an Ottoman-sponsored and Ottoman-directed genocide against the Armenians, to pay reparations to the families of these victims, and to return the provinces of eastern Anatolia to the Armenians. This movement, however, even at the peak of its activity, had virtually no chance of reaching its stated goals. First, the government of the Turkish Republic certainly was not going to revise its interpretation and position on decisions made sixty years before by the government of the Ottoman Empire during World War I because of Armenian violence and threats of violence. By extension, therefore, discussions over reparations were meaningless. Finally, the prospect of violating the territorial sovereignty of the Turkish Republic, especially along the longest North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) border with the Soviet Union during the height of the Cold War, was preposterous. Yet during the contemporary period of Armenian terrorism ASALA and the Justice Commandos conducted attacks for over eleven years, killed more than seventy individuals, and wounded another five hundred.

Given these major differences it is hard to explain why the two periods ultimately had so many similarities. In particular how did the agents of ASALA and the Justice Commandos justify revenge and murder, why did they receive such favorable media and judicial treatment and freedom of movement, and why, or how, did they become glorified heroes of the Armenian diaspora? Covering all of these topics is beyond the scope of this chapter, which focuses only on the first question: sixty years after the events of 1915, how were the agents of ASALA and the Justice Commandos able to justify revenge as a motive and murder as an acceptable means?

In attempting to answer this question the link between the first period of violence and the second becomes quite clear: the acquittal of Soghomon Tehlirian for the murder of Talat. By the time of his assassination

six years of anti-Turkish and anti-Talat wartime propaganda in the Western press had for all intents and purposes already convicted him for the events of 1915 in eastern Anatolia. In 1919 the Ottoman courts condemned him to death. In this environment, combined with Tehlirian's moving testimony to the court in Berlin, his acquittal was not necessarily a surprise. The legitimacy and sense of righteous justice that this verdict conveyed to the Armenian diaspora emboldened the ARF to continue its attacks and convinced the diaspora that the West sympathized with the Armenian cause. Over the years the legacy and myth of Soghomon Tehlirian and to a lesser extent the other Nemesis agents facilitated and sustained a culture that glorified violence through the panegyrical books, monuments, and newspaper articles that followed. Tehlirian's tale became one of the central components of Armenian national discourse after 1915 and somehow even provided the moral justification necessary to embark on a campaign of murder and violence against the Turkish Republic throughout the 1970s and 1980s. The tragedy in all of this, however, is that Tehlirian's testimony was largely fabricated by the ARF.

THE IMAGE OF TALAT IN THE U.S. AND BRITISH PRESS

As one of the wartime leaders of a member of the Central Powers alliance, Talat received his fair share of negative publicity in the West. His demonization, along with the more general dehumanization of the "Turk," began as early as January 1915, well before reports of atrocities against the Armenians became common in the press, and continued throughout the next five years. After May 1915, and particularly after the announcement on May 24 that the Allied governments would hold "all members of the Ottoman government" responsible for the crimes "against humanity and civilization" being carried out against the Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire, 8 the personal attacks on Talat in the press intensified. While some blame was placed on Enver and on Germany, Talat's "dastardly conduct" and his "amusement" over the plight of the Armenians made his responsibility seem "incontestable." The calls in the press to hold Talat to account echoed the Allied declaration.9 Ominously, one of the articles even proclaimed that "the time will come" when "Talaat and his evil associates...will be hunted down and treated as common murderers by the avenging powers." 10

Over the course of the next few years the articles attempted to establish Talat's guilt and complicity in the Armenian massacres by publishing

various statements that he allegedly made (verified by "excellent authority") striving to show that he was worse even than Abdülhamid II, and through the use of U.S. ambassador Henry Morgenthau's recollections. ¹¹ Curiously these articles oscillated between racist generalizations about the subhuman "Turk" and attempts to disassociate the actions of Talat and the Committee of Union and Progress from the Turkish citizens of the empire, sometimes even in the same article. ¹² One of the more interesting methods employed was the claim that Talat was in fact not of "true Turkish blood" but "of mixed 'gipsy' descent." ¹³

Beginning in August 1918, calls for the punishment of those responsible for the Armenian massacres, including Talat, and anti-Turkish editorials were once again popular topics in the press. ¹⁴ In one particularly scathing editorial about Talat the author asks: "The worst orgies of Abdul Hamid, the Red Sultan, pale before the crimes of this monster in human form. Is he to be allowed to escape?" ¹⁵ After the Ottoman court-martial condemned Talat, along with Enver and Cemal, to death in absentia in July 1919, ¹⁶ however, criticism of Talat took a curious turn. As if being a murderer and a monster was not enough, he was accused of being an aspiring Bolshevik as well. ¹⁷ Thus by the time of his assassination he had already been convicted by both the court of Western public opinion and the Ottoman court, which had also condemned him to death in absentia. Therefore his death, despite being gunned down in broad daylight in front of a number of eyewitnesses, was more or less welcomed by the Western media and, presumably, by Western public opinion.

THE ASSASSINATION OF TALAT AND THE TRIAL OF SOGHOMON TEHLIRIAN

Between April 1920 and March 1921 Talat was largely forgotten in the Western press, until his assassination by Soghomon Tehlirian. The basics of Tehlirian's story are well known and well covered in the historiography and are the primary subject of at least two books. ¹⁸ On March 15, 1921, Tehlirian shot and killed Talat Paşa on a street in Berlin in open view, was subdued by a crowd of onlookers, and was subsequently arrested and imprisoned. The press reacted immediately. After a brief description of the crime the initial reports concentrated specifically on Talat himself and primarily revisited the themes and events that had been so prevalent in the years leading up to his assassination: his personal responsibility and enthusiasm for the Armenian deportations and massacres, his criminality, the death sentence handed down to him by the Ottoman court-martial,

and Morgenthau's impressions of the man.¹⁹ Only two new elements were introduced at this time. First, it was claimed that Talat had enriched himself through property and financial acquisitions at the expense of the Armenians. Second, whereas some of the earlier reporting had tried to distance Talat from "Turks" by emphasizing his non-Turkish qualities, he was now being branded as "thoroughly Turkish" and "so essentially a Turk."²⁰

Very quickly, however, the attention of the press turned to the 24-year-old student who had pulled the trigger and ended the life of the "Exterminator of the Armenians." The early coverage unanimously interpreted the assassination as an act of vengeance. As Tehlirian's story began to trickle out, these assumptions were confirmed. Through statements made to the police and the press, it became clear that the assassination was not simply to avenge the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire who had suffered under Talat's administration but also to avenge Tehlirian's own personal loss: the death of his parents, brothers, and sisters during the deportations. In his own words, he had "lived only to revenge the deaths not only of my own mother and father, but also the persecution and massacres of the Armenian people, to whom Talaat Pasha was the wholesale murderer."

The trial of Soghomon Tehlirian began on June 2, 1921, and lasted only two days. He admitted openly that he had shot and killed Talat and never showed any remorse for the crime: "It is not I who am the murderer. It is he [Talat]." He maintained that his "conscience was clean." In fact in one of his earliest statements he claimed that "it fills me with happiness to know that when my compatriots hear of his death they will be proud of the deed of their fellow-countryman." The key to his defense was that he had been compelled to murder Talat, whom he had only accidentally discovered in Berlin, by a vision of his murdered mother. In this vision his mother's corpse rose up from the ground and stated: "You know that Talaat Pasha is here. You are utterly indifferent. You are therefore not my son." Tehlirian claimed that it was only after this scolding from his mother that he had made the preparations necessary to murder Talat.

Critical to convincing the court and the jury that Tehlirian could not resist the commands of his mother and therefore suffered from a form of temporary insanity was the trauma that he suffered from personally witnessing the massacre of his entire family and village in Erzincan in 1915. The narration of his unspeakable and horrific experience captivated the courtroom and the press and was the critical turning point in the trial. With extreme difficulty Tehlirian described the fateful day in June

1915 when he and his family were deported from their homes in Erzincan. Only a short while after they started out Ottoman gendarmes attacked the refugee column. He saw his sister pulled away and raped, his mother shot and killed, and his brother's head split open with an axe. He lost sight of his father. Tehlirian himself was wounded and knocked unconscious. When he awoke two days later he was underneath a pile of corpses, including that of his brother. Whenever he recalled this terrible experience later in life the smell of the corpses returned and induced dizzy spells. As far as he could tell he was the only survivor of the attack.³¹ Two of the medical experts called to testify on Tehlirian's physical and mental condition agreed that a trauma of this magnitude had left him in a state where he was not in complete control of his actions.³²

Even Tehlirian's defense attorney admitted in his closing argument that "at first we had doubts as to whether or not the gentlemen of the jury would believe the defendant's testimony." To support Tehlirian's account a number of acquaintances, other survivors, and eyewitnesses, including Johannes Lepsius, were called to court to testify. Tehlirian's acquaintances describe a depressed, melancholy, haunted young man who suffered from physical torment, including seizures and fainting spells, caused by the events he had witnessed. The survivors, eyewitnesses, and Lepsius corroborated Tehlirian's description of the massacres by relating their own accounts of what happened in eastern Anatolia. Furthermore, Talat's responsibility for the massacres was addressed throughout the trial. It was established that the Armenian community held him personally accountable for the events. The trial of Soghomon Tehlirian for the assassination of Talat quickly turned into the trial of Talat for the events of 1915. 33 Particularly damning to Talat's legacy was the admission of telegrams into the court record allegedly signed by Talat, specifically ordering the destruction of the Armenians in eastern Anatolia.³⁴ The debate over the authenticity of these telegrams, however, continues today.³⁵

Familiar racist generalizations about Turks were heard in the closing arguments: "It is well known that wherever the Turks have set foot, they have carried a bloody flag with them." References were made to the death sentence handed down to Talat by the Ottoman court-martial, essentially validating Tehlirian's act. He was presented to the jury as "the avenger of his people, of the one million Armenians who were killed. He is the one man who is standing up to the author of those massacres; he is facing the man responsible for the annihilation of his people." In fact the defense attorneys advised the jury to consider Tehlirian to be simply an executioner who carried out a sanctioned death sentence. The medical experts that he was

compelled to act, the tales of other atrocities, and the defense teams' persuasive arguments convinced the jury members. After only a few hours of deliberation they returned a verdict of "not guilty." ³⁷

The response to the Berlin court's decision among the Armenian observers in the courtroom and within the diaspora was euphoria, satisfaction, and gratification.³⁸ The Armenians had struck back. The justice promised to them by the Allies in May 1915 but initially denied had been achieved. Furthermore, the decision validated and justified murder as an acceptable means for the Armenian community to seek justice and revenge. After the successful assassination of Talat, Tehlirian's acquittal, and the apparent backing of the international community that this decision symbolized the Armenian Revolutionary Federation proceeded with its assassination campaign against the former members of the CUP. Behbud Khan Cevahir, Said Halim, Behaettin Şakir, Cemal Azmi, and Cemal Paşa were all brought down by various agents of the Nemesis operation.³⁹

Only one other member of Nemesis, Missak Torlakian, was arrested and brought to trial. After relating his own tale of tragedy and trauma, he too was acquitted on grounds of temporary insanity for the murder of Behbud Khan Cevahir, primarily based on the opinions of Greek, Armenian, and British doctors. ⁴⁰ The other assassins were never apprehended. The press continued to stress the responsibility of Talat, Cemal, and Enver for the Armenian massacres, labeling them "devils incarnate" and "sordid and cruel rogues." ⁴¹ They disregarded but at least published Talat's memoirs, which stated that the massacres were neither state-sponsored nor premeditated. ⁴²

Curiously, however, in addressing the issue of the Ottoman death sentences in 1922 the press acknowledged that the decisions had come "partly from the hostilities of Turkish domestic politics, partly from a desire to placate the Allies, chiefly from hatred of the men who had bet on the wrong horse" and that they were "not an expression of opinion on the Armenian massacres." Despite the recognition that the Ottoman courts that condemned these men to death were less than impartial, the Western press neither questioned their guilt nor condemned or even expressed concern over the Armenian assassinations of Ottoman officials between 1921 and 1922. The acquittals of Tehlirian in particular as well as Torlakian, and the lack of any response from the West other than implicit support for the murders, provided the foundation for the culture of righteous violence within the Armenian diaspora that tragically reemerged in the early 1970s.

THE LEGACY OF SOGHOMON TEHLIRIAN AND CONTEMPORARY ARMENIAN TERRORISM

The success of Operation Nemesis became the stuff of legends within the Armenian diaspora. While the ARF attempted to keep its participation in the assassinations secret, its involvement was at the very least suspected by the Western governments and Turkey.⁴⁴ It appeared to be common knowledge within the diaspora.⁴⁵ Some of the others have been recognized,⁴⁶ but it is the story of Soghomon Tehlirian that has most captivated the Armenian diaspora. Tehlirian is the subject of at least three books in English, one film, one master's thesis, and numerous articles.⁴⁷

As noted, the murder of Talat and his subsequent acquittal were a cause for celebration within the Armenian diaspora. Tehlirian instantly became a national hero and a revered figure and was an honored guest throughout the world in 1922. ⁴⁸ The Armenian authors Vartkes Yeghiayan and Edward Alexander both describe scenes of awe when their respective fathers met Soghomon Tehlirian in person for the first time. ⁴⁹ In his oral history of Armenian survivors Donald Miller quotes one interviewee who pointed to a picture of Tehlirian and exclaimed: "I would have done it myself, believe me.... I look at this picture each and every day for inspiration."

Although it appears that he may have published his memoirs in Armenian around 1958,⁵¹ Tehlirian's reappearance in English sources occurred at the time of his death in May 1960 in California. Under the name Saro Melikian, his obituary appeared in both the New York Times and the Times of London. Both articles reaffirmed his heroic status as the avenger of the Armenian people for the crimes of 1915. 52 Shortly thereafter a four-part series on his life appeared in the Armenian Review, describing him as a legend who was able to "attain immortality in the minds of men."53 This was followed by another article in the same journal in 1962. 54 Coinciding with the fiftieth anniversary and the demonstrations in Beirut and Yerevan, the first book detailing and glorifying Tehlirian's role in the assassination of Talat and the righteousness of his cause was published in 1965 by an Armenian in California, Lindy Avakian, who had known him personally.⁵⁵ In 1969 a monument was erected in a Fresno, California, cemetery to commemorate his life and the contributions and sacrifices that he made for the Armenian nation. After that the Tehlirian story did not resurface again until 1974, when this culture of glorifying and venerating murder as an acceptable means of justice manifested itself in a virtual reenactment of March 15, 1921, in January 1973.

On January 27, 1973, an elderly Armenian American named Gourgen Yanikian murdered the Turkish consul general Mehmet Baydar and consul Bahadır Demir in Santa Barbara. Depressed, despondent, bankrupt, and with nothing to lose, Yanikian had first contemplated suicide before devising a plan to lure the two Turkish diplomats to the hotel room where he killed them.⁵⁶ He was obviously inspired by Tehlirian's story and perhaps by Lindy Avakian's book on the subject in particular. The similarities that unfolded were unmistakable.⁵⁷ Like Tehlirian, Yanikian claimed he was tormented by memories of 1915. He had watched while members of his family, including his brother, and thousands of other Armenians were murdered.⁵⁸ In the days preceding the double murder Yanikian claimed that he was visited by apparitions of his murdered brother and had promised that he would avenge him. 59 Yanikian had every intention of being caught and, as in the trial in Berlin, turning his legal proceedings into a means through which to remind the world of the events in eastern Anatolia in 1915 and to indict the Turkish government. 60 Following the lead set by Tehlirian, Yanikian pled "not guilty" to murder, arguing that he did not kill two men but "destroyed two evils." He never exhibited any remorse for the taking of innocent lives.⁶¹

For the most part the Armenian community rallied to support Yanikian and raised funds for his legal defense.⁶² As in the case of Tehlirian and Torlakian, the defense strategy employed by his lawyers attempted to show that the horrific scenes that Yanikian had witnessed as a child had caused "lasting trauma," which, when combined with the pain caused by Turkey's continued denial of the atrocities, left him mentally impaired.⁶³ Unlike Tehlirian's trial in Berlin, however, the jury in California found the assassin guilty of two counts of first degree murder. Despite his conviction, however, certain elements within the diaspora were inspired by the events in Santa Barbara and heeded Yanikian's call for "war" between the Armenian diaspora and Turkish officials.⁶⁴ In a little more than two years after Yanikian's trial both ASALA and the Justice Commandos had begun their campaigns of terror.

Whereas Tehlirian and his associates within Nemesis had gained the adulation of the Armenian diaspora through the assassination of men who (at least in their minds) had been responsible for the massacres of 1915, Yanikian proved that the diaspora would support the assassination of any Turkish government official. Somehow working for the Turkish government or in many cases simply being related to an official of the Turkish government by 1973 was enough to be condemned to death by the Armenian community for the events of 1915. Carrying out these death

sentences made someone an instant hero, whether or not the victim was a diplomat, a spouse, or even a child. Misguided and illegal as they may have been in the early 1920s, the agents of Nemesis were still operating under a completely different set of ethics and morals. Despite these obvious differences, however, the Armenian American press still used the stories and legends of the Nemesis group, with Tehlirian at its core, to justify and encourage violence against Turks throughout the 1970s and 1980s as an acceptable means for the diaspora to advance the Armenian cause.

A special day was set aside to remember and commemorate the "Avengers" of the Armenians. 65 Armenian students put on reenactments of Tehlirian's trial, emphasizing the "not guilty" verdict. 66 Particularly interesting is a series of articles that ran in the Armenian Weekly, the newspaper of the ARF and by extension the Justice Commandos, from April 1975 until July 1975. This series, "Acts of Justice: Bringing the Turkish Massacrists to Bay," explained Operation Nemesis in detail and related how the Armenians had taken matters into their own hands after justice had been denied to them by the Western powers and the new government in Istanbul. They had tracked down and murdered those responsible for the events of 1915. 67 This idea that the Armenians were forced to seek their own justice outside of the courts and other acceptable institutions both in the 1970s and in the 1980s is a repeated theme throughout the period.⁶⁸ It is certainly more than just a coincidence that this extended coverage of the exploits of the Nemesis group preceded the first Justice Commando attacks, the assassinations of the Turkish ambassadors in Vienna and Paris, by only a few weeks.

Three of these articles were devoted to Talat's assassination, Tehlirian's trial, and his acquittal. In this account the "Goering of Turkey" was "brought to the bar of justice" by the "Armenian avenger, Soghomon Tehlirian," who had "become a subject of national veneration among Armenians." As far as the author of the article was concerned, Tehlirian's tale was one of double justice: not only was Talat murdered, but Tehlirian was set free. These articles do not question or discuss the legality of the assassinations. Tehlirian was acquitted, which seems to have been all the justification that the Armenians needed. In fact in November 1979, ten murders into the terrorist campaign of ASALA and the Justice Commandos and just after the murder of the son of the Turkish ambassador to the Hague, the executive director of the Institute for Armenian Questions in Munich explicitly stated that, while the morality of terrorism is debatable, "the acquittal of Soghomon Tehlirian, for example, is precedent for regarding our acts of terrorism against the Turk as moral." 10 process of the trial of the son of the Turk as moral.

The image of Tehlirian changed slightly around 1980, however. He was no longer the Armenian Avenger to celebrate but rather the Armenian warrior to follow and emulate in a battle that is still going on. Yet another article relating the great deeds of the "Avengers" even claims that the Armenian martyrs were only temporarily appeased. In what amounts to a call to arms, the article states that "present day Turkey is as much, and maybe more, responsible for the crimes committed against the Armenian nation": "let us heed their message: to punish the unjust, to fight for the rights of the Armenian people, to knock on the doors of international justice. And if that justice is deaf and blind, to tear it down and institute our own." A year later, on the sixtieth anniversary of Talat's assassination, these very same themes were revisited. Tehlirian might have "restored the self-respect and dignity of a nation," but the fight was not over. Those who believe the Republic of Turkey was not responsible for the crimes of the Ottoman Empire in 1915 "are utterly mistaken."

To give one more example of how important the story of Soghomon Tehlirian was to the Armenian diaspora, between May 1980 and September 1984, during the peak years of Armenian terrorist activity, thirty-six articles appeared in the Armenian American press. They documented public support, public financing, filming, and satisfaction with director Hrayr Toukhanian's efforts to bring Tehlirian's story to the big screen in the film *Assignment Berlin*. The Armenian community apparently believed that the story behind Talat's assassination and the Tehlirian acquittal would reach an audience outside of the Armenian diaspora through film, bringing a greater understanding of both the Armenian cause and the justification for violence to achieve it.

The death of Tehlirian, the release of his story, and the monument built to commemorate his significance within the diaspora coincided with the more general assertiveness and aggressiveness of the diaspora immediately before and after the fiftieth anniversary demonstrations in Beirut and Yerevan. Tehlirian's story and his significance experienced a resurgence after the Yanikian murders, proving that the diaspora was willing to honor and glorify the murders not just of those that they held responsible for the events of 1915 but in fact of anyone even remotely associated with the Turkish government. The use of Tehlirian's legacy went through another transformation in the early 1980s, when it was used to justify further violence against the Turkish Republic and as a means to bring the righteousness of the Armenian cause to a much wider public. But there is a problem with the Tehlirian story.

INCONSISTENCIES IN THE SOGHOMON TEHLIRIAN STORY

The greatest long-term legacy of Soghomon Tehlirian was not the assassination of Talat in March 1921 but his acquittal in June. Over the years at least two scholars have questioned the validity of Tehlirian's trial and the information that was withheld from the court. In A Crime of Vengeance Edward Alexander identifies three issues that were deliberately withheld and that possibly could have swayed the jury's decision toward a guilty verdict. The first was Tehlirian's participation in the irregular Armenian volunteer units that fought with the Russians against Turkey. According to Alexander, after the massacres at Erzincan Tehlirian made his way to Tbilisi, where he was able to join up with these units. 73 The second was Tehlirian's assassination of the Armenian collaborator and informer Harootiun Mugerditchian in Istanbul in March 1919.⁷⁴ The third was Tehlirian's denial that he was working for or was part of a larger network or organization, in this case the ARF, that assisted and planned the assassination.⁷⁵ More recently Seref Ünal has pointed to the same concerns in his analysis of the Tehlirian trial.⁷⁶

It is unclear how much of an impact the knowledge of Tehlirian's participation in the Armenian irregular units would have had on the decision of the jury, especially if, as Alexander claims, Tehlirian joined after he had witnessed the slaughter of his family. Certainly the sequence of events between 1915 and March 1921 would have changed, but it is unlikely that this would have altered the outcome of the trial, given the jury's acceptance of revenge as a justifiable motive. The other two points are more problematic. But the knowledge that Tehlirian had already assassinated one man who had been condemned to death by the Armenian community for alleged collaboration with the Turkish authorities and proof that he was an agent of an ARF operation to assassinate the former leaders of the Ottoman empire, which the authorities suspected but either could not prove or did not investigate, would undoubtedly have changed things. The story of a young man mentally and physically traumatized from witnessing his family murdered, wandering aimlessly around Europe until he accidentally discovered Talat in Berlin, and murdering him after he had been chastised by a vision of his mother's corpse would not have been as effective in eliciting a "not guilty" verdict if the jury had known Tehlirian was a veteran assassin and part of an organization that had been tracking and preparing for Talat's assassination for years.

Much more important than what was not said or learned during Tehlirian's trial, however, is what was said. As noted, his acquittal was primarily due to his personal account of having witnessed the rape of his sisters and the massacre of his entire family and his having woken up wounded in a pile of corpses, the sole survivor of the entire refugee column that he had been traveling in. This story moved the jury members and undoubtedly supplied them with enough evidence, reason, or sympathy to conclude that his assassination of Talat was justified. Trying to imagine this horrific experience and the trauma it must have caused made it much easier to believe that Tehlirian was under mental duress when he committed the crime. The other testimony, which attested to his mental and physical condition, corroborated the atrocities that he had seen, and placed the blame for these acts on his victim, made it that much easier to question his guilt.

This testimony, however, has a major problem that is ignored, glossed over, or simply omitted in most of the literature. Located quite openly in the primary and secondary materials available to scholars is evidence that the entire personal account that he gave to the court in Berlin, arguably one of the most famous eyewitness reports on the Armenian massacres of 1915, was completely fabricated. Contrary to his statements in court Tehlirian was not in Erzincan in 1915 and could not have witnessed a massacre there. In 1913 Tehlirian left eastern Anatolia to join his father and brother in Belgrade to pursue his engineering studies. As soon as World War I broke out Tehlirian left Belgrade for Tbilisi to join the Armenian Volunteer Regiments that invaded the Ottoman Empire with the Russian army. He did not return to Erzincan until July 1916, when the Russian army took the city from the Ottomans. All news of what had happened in Erzincan came to Tehlirian from secondhand sources. Furthermore his father appears never to have left Belgrade.

These details of Soghomon Tehlirian's trajectory from eastern Anatolia during the war to Berlin in 1921 that contradicted his sworn testimony came out publicly as early as 1960 in the *Armenian Review* and continued to leak out in Avakian's book and the ARF press. The Even if the details were missed in the publications of the 1960s, 1970s, and early 1980s Jacques Derogy's comprehensive book on Operation Nemesis, *Resistance and Revenge: The Armenian Assassination of the Turkish Leaders Responsible for the 1915 Massacres and Deportations*, first published in French in 1986 and then in English in 1990, confirmed these details about Tehlirian's journey. Derogy also claims that the entire defense strategy, including the retraction of earlier statements made to the Berlin police, the gruesome details of his family's destruction, and the command from his mother's

ghost, was coached and financed by the ARF.⁷⁸ This evidence seems very credible, considering that Derogy had access to the ARF's archives and assuming that the ARF had no reason intentionally to alter details of Tehlirian's life that would undermine his legendary status.

What is also surprising is how this evidence has been used in the subsequent literature. Some have simply ignored it. The 2006 reprint of the translated court transcripts in *The Case of Soghomon Tehlirian* by Vartkes Yeghiayan presents this document and Tehlirian's testimony as a valid primary source with no disclaimer about its inaccuracies. At least four publications on the Armenian massacres have treated Tehlirian's testimony as such. 79 Avakian's The Cross and the Crescent and Bobelian's Children of Armenia at least implicitly acknowledge that Tehlirian was not in Erzincan in 1915. 80 Although Avakian and Bobelian skip over Tehlirian's testimony, as does Atamian's original 1960 article in the Armenian Review, Bobelian does recognize the significance that Tehlirian's statements had at the trial: they "captured the rapt attention of those in the courtroom." He does not, however, explain that the people in the court believed that they were listening to an eyewitness to unspeakable horrors. Furthermore, while both authors emphasize the trauma that Tehlirian endured when he found Erzincan and his family's home destroyed in 1916 upon his return with the Russian army, this was not the experience or tale that impacted the courtroom.⁸¹ Derogy, the only author to expose the fabricated defense, correctly argues that Tehlirian's "defense rested on the fact that he had seen his family massacred in front of him, at Erzincan, and that he himself only escaped extermination by a miracle." But even he quotes Tehlirian's statement to the court in detail and offers no commentary or analysis on this contradiction.82

CONCLUSION

The most important link between the Armenian violence of Operation Nemesis and the violence of the Armenian terrorist organizations of the 1970s and 1980s (ASALA and the Justice Commandos) was the acquittal of Soghomon Tehlirian in June 1921. The foundation for his acquittal was the anti-Turkish and anti-Talat sentiments that flowed freely in the Western press between 1915 and 1921, promises made by the Allied governments during the war, and the decision of an Ottoman government under duress and fighting for its survival. The catalyst for Tehlirian's acquittal was his horrible and shocking testimony, which established a personal connection between the assassin and his victim and gave credence to his claims of physical and mental anguish. In hindsight it would have

been shocking if the jury had not returned a verdict of "not guilty." The acquittal allowed the legend of Soghomon Tehlirian to grow from simple violent retribution to a much grander sense of justified violence for the entire Armenian diaspora. It enabled the Armenian community not to be satisfied with just revenge but to be proud that the West had not only tolerated but also sanctioned the murder of Turkish citizens.

Until the end of the contemporary period of Armenian terrorism in the late 1980s members of the Armenian diaspora, at least in the Armenian American press, were firmly behind the use of violence to achieve their goals. Whenever the means being used to achieve these goals were questioned or needed justification they simply brought up Tehlirian's acquittal as proof of the righteousness of their cause. Between 1973 and 1985 this righteous cause took the lives of more than seventy individuals who were innocent by any possible means of measurement. It is a tragedy that the justification for these acts is based on falsehoods told to a Berlin court in 1921. It is even more tragic that scholars working on the events of 1915 in eastern Anatolia fail to question the reliability of their sources or even to check the accuracy of the information that they use. The legacy of Soghomon Tehlirian, the man who carried out the "most significant act of resolution" in the history of the Armenian diaspora since 1915,83 needs to be readdressed by both the Armenian community who idolize him and the scholars who have helped to maintain his legacy.

NOTES

- For a sampling, see Gerard Chaliand and Yves Ternon, The Armenians; Yves Ternon, The Armenian Cause; Peter Balakian, The Burning Tigris; and Michael Bobelian, The Children of Armenia.
- The primary exception is Bobelian, who notes the influence that Soghomon Tehlirian's story had on Gourgen Yanikian's actions and the strategies adopted by Yanikian's defense team. Yanikian was sentenced to life imprisonment for the murders of Mehmet Baydar and Bahadır Demir in Santa Barbara, California, on January 27, 1973.
- See Michael Gunter, "The Armenian Terrorist Campaign against Turkey," Orbis
 (Summer 1983): 447–77; Anat Kurz and Ariel Merari, ASALA; Michael M.
 Gunter, "Pursuing the Just Cause of Their People"; Francis P. Hyland, Armenian
 Terrorism; and Michael Gunter, "Armenian Terrorism: A Reappraisal," Journal of
 Conflict Studies 27, no. 2 (2007): 109–28.
- Gunter, "Pursuing the Just Cause of Their People," 29–30; Gunter, "Armenian Terrorism," 114.
- 5. Hampig Sassounian, the Armenian who murdered Kemal Arikan, the Turkish consul general in Los Angeles in 1982, is still in prison.

- 6. Markar Melkonian, *My Brother's Road: An American's Fateful Journey to Armenia* (New York: I. B. Tauris, 2007), 84. Melkonian also has a foundation and website: www.melkonian.org.
- 7. "Says Turks Advise Christians to Flee," *New York Times*, January 11, 1915; "Christians in Great Peril," *New York Times*, January 13, 1915; "How the Turkish Empire Should Be Made after the War," *New York Times*, January 24, 1915; "Talaat Says Turks Fight for Life," *New York Times*, February 18, 1915; "Massacre by Turks in Caucasus Towns," *New York Times*, February 23, 1915.
- Department of State telegram, May 29, 1915, accessed at http://www.armenian -genocide.org/uploads/Affirmation/160.gif; "Allies to Punish Turks Who Murder," New York Times, May 24, 1915.
- 9. "The Armenian Massacres: Exterminating a Race: A Record of Horrors," *London Times*, October 8, 1915 (quotation); "Destruction of a Race: Young Turk Policy against Armenians," *London Times*, September 25, 1915; "Wholesale Murder in Armenia: Exterminating a Race: Talaat Bey's Treachery," *London Times*, September 30, 1915.
- 10. "Wiping Out the Armenians," London Times, September 30, 1915.
- 11. "Armenian Massacres: Lord Cromer's Indictment," London Times, October 7, 1915; "The Armenian Massacres: Exterminating a Race: A Record of Horrors," London Times, October 8, 1915; "The Armenian Massacres," London Times, October 8, 1915; "Turkey at the End of the War," New York Times, January 17, 1917; "Mr. Morgenthau's Reminiscences," New York Times, April 28, 1918.
- 12. "The Armenian Massacres," *London Times*, October 8, 1915; "Must Expel Turks, Declares Bryce," *New York Times*, January 27, 1917; "The Case for War against Turkey," *New York Times*, June 23, 1918;
- 13. "Wiping Out the Armenians," *London Times*, September 30, 1915. See also Henry Morgenthau, *Ambassador Morgenthau's Story* (2008), 14, 98.
- 14. "Turkey's Peace Ministry: Survival of Committee Influence," London Times,
 November 2, 1918; "Asia Minor," New York Times, November 10, 1918; "Turkey
 under the Allies: British in Constantinople," London Times, November 18, 1918;
 "Heir Apparent Blames Ex-Ministers," New York Times, November 27, 1918;
 "Turks Talking of Reform: Punishment for Armenian Massacres," London Times,
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 York Times, December 7, 1918; "The Turks," New York Times, December 16, 1918;
 "The Unteachable Turk," New York Times, December 16, 1918; "Turk Chamber
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 Times, December 27, 1918; "Armenians Issue Protest: Do Not Want Authors of
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 Armenia," New York Times, January 4, 1920.
- 15. "A Great Criminal," London Times, January 21, 1919.
- 16. "Turkey Condemns Its War Leaders," New York Times, July 13, 1919.
- 17. "German Socialists 'Convert' Talaat," New York Times, December 7, 1919; "'Red' World Plot: Moslem Hordes to Be Roused: German Agents at Work," London Times, February 3, 1920; "Turks Meet Reds to Plot Revolts," New York Times, April 20, 1920.

- 18. Lindy V. Avakian, The Cross and the Crescent; Edward Alexander, A Crime of Vengeance; see also Chaliand and Ternon, The Armenians, 92–94; Jacques Derogy, Resistance and Revenge, xxii–xxvi, 64–105; Balakian, The Burning Tigris; Michael Bobelian, "Judgment in Berlin," in Children of Armenia, 51–63; Hyland, Armenian Terrorism, 21; Samantha Power, A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 1–16; Ternon, The Armenian Cause, 100.
- 19. "Talaat Pasha Slain in Berlin Suburb," *New York Times*, March 16, 1921; "Talaat Pasha Murdered: Armenia's Vengeance," *London Times*, March 16, 1921; "Talaat's Career: Exterminator of the Armenians," *London Times*, March 16, 1921; "The Late Talaat Pasha: An Engaging Villain," *London Times*, March 17, 1921.
- 20. "Talaat's Career: Exterminator of the Armenians," London Times, March 16, 1921.
- 21. Ibid.
- 22. "Talaat Pasha Slain in Berlin Suburb," New York Times, March 16, 1921; "Talaat Pasha Murdered: Armenia's Vengeance," London Times, March 16, 1921; "Assassin Boasts of Talaat's Death: 'It is Not I Who Am the Murderer It Is He,' Says Young Armenian," New York Times, March 17, 1921; "The Late Talaat Pasha: An Engaging Villain," London Times, March 17, 1921.
- 23. "Assassin Boasts of Talaat's Death: 'It is Not I Who Am the Murderer It Is He,' Says Young Armenian," *New York Times*, March 17, 1921; "The Late Talaat Pasha: An Engaging Villain," *London Times*, March 17, 1921.
- 24. "The Late Talaat Pasha: An Engaging Villain," London Times, March 17, 1921.
- "Assassin Boasts of Talaat's Death: 'It is Not I Who Am the Murderer It Is He,'
 Says Young Armenian," New York Times, March 17, 1921.
- 26. "Says Mother's Ghost Ordered Him to Kill," New York Times, June 3, 1921.
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 Says Young Armenian," New York Times, March 17, 1921.
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- 29. Ibid. See also *The Trial of Soghomon Tehlirian* at http://cilicia.com/armo_tehlirian .html; "The Avenger of Blood: Why Talaat Pasha Was Shot," *Times*, June 3, 1921; "Armenian Acquitted for Killing Talaat: Defense Introduces Accounts of Grand Vizier's Brutality in Conducting Massacres," *New York Times*, June 4, 1921; Derogy, *Resistance and Revenge*, xxiii–xxiv; Sarah Vartabedian, "Commemoration of an Assassin," 2.
- 30. Bobelian, Children of Armenia, 63; Derogy, Resistance and Revenge, 87.
- 31. The Trial of Soghomon Tehlirian; "The Avenger of Blood: Why Talaat Pasha Was Shot," Times, June 3, 1921; "Says Mother's Ghost Ordered Him to Kill," New York Times, June 3, 1921; Alexander, A Crime of Vengeance, 69–70; Balakian, The Burning Tigris; Vartabedian, "Commemoration of an Assassin," 2; Power, A Problem from Hell, 3–4.
- Alexander, A Crime of Vengeance, 185; and Vartkes Yeghiayan, ed., The Case of Soghomon Tehlirian, xxix; "The Ghost Real in Its Way," New York Times, June 4, 1921; "Why Talaat's Assassin Was Acquitted," Current History (New York) 14, no. 4 (July 1921): 551.
- 33. Yeghiayan, *The Case of Soghomon Tehlirian*; "Says Mother's Ghost Ordered Him to Kill," *New York Times*, June 3, 1921; "Armenian Acquitted for Killing Talaat," *New York Times*, June 4, 1921; Avakian, *The Cross and the Crescent*, 160–204; Bobelian, *Children of Armenia*, 63; Chaliand and Ternon, *Armenians*, 93–94.

- 34. "Why Talaat's Assassin Was Acquitted," *Current History* (New York) 14, no. 4 (July 1921): 551–55.
- 35. For more on these telegrams, known as the *Naim-Andonian Documents*, see the exchange of Judith E. Tucker, Michael Gunter, Türkkaya Ataöv, and Vahakn Dadrian in the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 40 (2008): 171–79, 728–29; and 41 (2009): 179–80, 367.
- 36. Yeghiayan, The Case of Soghomon Tehlirian.
- 37. "Armenian Acquitted for Killing Talaat," *New York Times*, June 4, 1921; "Talaat's Assailant Acquitted: Armenians' Sufferings," *London Times*, June 4, 1921.
- 38. "Talaat's Assailant Acquitted: Armenians' Sufferings," *London Times*, June 4, 1921; Alexander, *A Crime of Vengeance*, 187; Derogy, *Resistance and Revenge*, xxiv.
- 39. "Turks Enraged: British Court-Martial Acquits Armenian," London Times, November 11, 1921; "Ex-Grand Vizier Murdered: Prince Said Halim's Career," London Times, December 7, 1921; "Two Young Turks Murdered in Berlin," New York Times, April 19, 1922; "Jemal Pasha Dead: Shot in Tiflis: Tyrant of Syria," London Times, July 26, 1922; "Djemal Pasha, Fugitive, Assassinated in Tiflis; Condemned as Author of Armenian Massacres," New York Times, July 26, 1922; "One After Another," New York Times, July 27, 1922; Lütem, Armenian Terror, 14; Alexander, A Crime of Vengeance, 199.
- 40. "Turks Enraged: British Court-Martial Acquits Armenian," *London Times*, November 11, 1921.
- 41. "One After Another," New York Times, July 27, 1922; "Enver Pasha Slain by Soviet Force," New York Times, August 18, 1922; "Enver Pasha," New York Times, August 19, 1922 (quotations); "Enver Pasha's Career: The Evil Genius of Turkey," London Times, October 20, 1923.
- 42. Talat Pasha, "Posthumous Memoirs of Talaat Pasha," 294-95.
- 43. "One After Another," New York Times, July 27, 1922.
- 44. "Assassin Boasts of Talaat's Death," New York Times, March 17, 1921; "Talaat Is Mourned as Germany's Friend," New York Times, March 18, 1921; "Turks Enraged," London Times, November 11, 1921; "Ex-Grand Vizier Murdered," London Times, December 7, 1921; "Two Young Turks Murdered in Berlin," New York Times, April 19, 1922; "One After Another," New York Times, July 27, 1922; "Jemal Pasha's Murder: Kemalist Threats," London Times, August 29, 1922; Yeghiayan, The Case of Soghomon Tehlirian.
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- 46. "Shiragian, 73, Dies; An Armenian Hero," New York Times, April 16, 1973; "Avenger's Day Set for This Saturday," Armenian Observer, March 20, 1974; "Acts of Justice: Bringing the Turk Massacrists to Bay," Armenian Weekly, April 17, 1975; "How Arshavir Shiragian and Aram Yerganian Disposed of Behaeddin Shakir, Djemal Azmi," Armenian Weekly, April 17, April 24, May 1, May 8, May 15, 1975; "Acts of Justice: Bringing Turk Massacrists to Bay," Armenian Weekly, May 22, 1975; "Nemesis Series: Shiragian Smites Said Halim," Armenian Weekly, May 29, 1975; "The 'Forgotten Assassination' of Djemal Pasha: Who Did It, How, Where It Happened," Armenian Weekly, June 6, 1975; "Was Enver Pasha Killed by an Armenian? The Suggestion Is There," Armenian Weekly, July 10, 1975; Shiragian, The Legacy; "The Avenging Fists," Armenian Weekly, April 26, 1980; "Missak Torlakian Memorial Tombstone Revealed," Armenian Weekly, September 27, 1980; "Justice to

- the People of Ararat," *Armenian Reporter*, April 8, 1982; Vartkes Yeghiayan and Ara Arabyan, *The Case of Misak Torlakian* (Glendale, Calif.: Centern for Armenian Remembrance, 2006).
- 47. Avakian, *The Cross and the Crescent*; Alexander, *A Crime of Vengeance*; Yeghiayan, *The Case of Soghomon Tehlirian*; Vartabedian, "Commemoration of an Assassin"; *Assignment Berlin* (directed by Hrayr Toukhanian, 1982).
- 48. Avakian, *The Cross and the Crescent*, 2,46; Derogy, *Resistance and Revenge*, 103; Vartabedian, "Commemoration of an Assassin." 7.
- Yeghiayan, The Case of Soghomon Tehlirian, xix-xx; Alexander, A Crime of Vengeance, 205–6.
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Beyond Complicity

British Responsibility for the Massacres of Armenians in World War I

Tal Buenos

In the study of massacres the case of World War I involves two different kinds of third-party association, whereas the Genocide Convention only makes reference to one. Aside from the perpetrators and victims of the Armenian massacres, the war and the circumstances leading up to it presented two significantly different types of third-party association that could mean responsibility for the fate of the victims: the more obvious one is by way of association with the perpetrators; the other one, less discussed, is by way of association with the victims. This chapter examines the second type of third-party association through the example of British influence on the Turco-Armenian conflict, in order to understand the nature of this association, why it is not covered by the Genocide Convention, and how it reflects on international politics.

The nature of Germany's complicity in the fate of the Armenians in World War I was brought forth by young historian and employee of the British Foreign Office Arnold Toynbee in close cooperation with James Bryce: due to the partnership between the Ottomans and the Germans in war, Germany assumed a leading role in the relationship and as such had a moral responsibility for the actions of its apprentice. Germany was in a position of influence on the Ottoman state and was well informed on its actions, the argument goes, so it could rather simply have stopped the massacres and saved the Armenian nation. Interestingly, the booklet that sets out to focus on the harm done to Ottoman Armenians by the Ottoman government ends with a detailed analysis of Germany's involvement. The booklet's final message, quite literally its bottom line, in large bold type, is not a message of threat to the Turks or a message of hope to the

Armenians. It addresses Germany, as if the entire booklet was designed to play a part in a dialogue among the Great Powers: "That is the indictment. Let Germany cease to deserve it."

The framing of Germany's role in the massacres of the Armenians was just part of a bigger picture that can only be fully depicted from the perspective of British interests. It is important to bear in mind that before the Germans were accused of complicity in the act of massacre an attempt was made to portray them as committing massacres themselves. In both cases, however, the purpose was the same: vilify the Germans for the sake of American support in the war. Both attempts, as their shared purpose attests, used massacres for propaganda and moral appeal for political gain.

The Bryce Committee (named after its leading man, James Bryce and officially known as the German Outrages Inquiry Committee) was appointed in December 1914 by the British prime minister, Herbert Henry Asquith. The committee was willing to vilify Germany by producing, translating, and disseminating a premeditatedly conclusive and strongly condemning report based on unverifiable information.² It has been considered an extreme example of propaganda and in a way introduced a new prototype for wartime propaganda, "in itself one of the worst atrocities of the war."³ It formulated a despicable manual for cashing in on people's care for human lives. While the Americans were still hesitant to join the war, the second piece of official propaganda was being produced: the Blue Book titled *The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, 1915–1916.*⁴ It followed a similar narrative pattern, with the Armenians replacing the Belgians as the small and oppressed people and the Turks taking the place of the Germans as the vicious perpetrators.⁵

The production of these massacre narratives was meant to accomplish Britain's two-phased goal in the American arena. First, to negate German claims that Britain's lust for power caused the war and win the support of public opinion in the United States. Second, to transform American passivity into a willingness to fight against the Germans and win the war. The seemingly selfless outcry against universally contemptible offenses, which would depict the enemy as brutal, cruel, and unjust and the saving of the oppressed as the cause for war, was the product of a British policy that successfully tainted the image of the Central Powers in American eyes. The Armenian fatalities presented the British with one of two major opportunities to meet that end. It is no coincidence that after the war was won the British government abandoned the Armenian narrative and lost interest in telling the story.

Decades after this propaganda had run its course, an older Toynbee looked back at the events surrounding the issuing of the Blue Book that he edited under Bryce's guidance in the midst of World War I. In retrospect he admitted that the British government had become "Madison-Avenue-minded," clearly describing the report on the massacres of the Armenians as "propaganda" and openly explaining why it was a failed attempt to win American support. Indeed Toynbee exposed the propaganda considerations behind the production of the Blue Book on the treatment of Ottoman Armenians and pointed out that its ultimate purpose was to present Germany in the negative light of having a complicitous role in the massacres.

In less truthful fashion, however, Toynbee sought absolution for his considerable role in the fashioning of the Blue Book, arguing that both he and Bryce were ignorant of the "political spider's web" in which they were innocently caught. This might have been believable had Toynbee only claimed his own lack of political awareness, as he was still in his twenties at the time, but his effort to portray Bryce as a misguided pawn used by the British government lacks any credibility.

The politically savvy Bryce, who joined the British Parliament in 1880, held governmental offices such as undersecretary of state for foreign affairs and served a term as the ambassador to the United States. For many years he was Britain's leading campaigner in matters of both U.S. relations and the Armenian Question and was only one year removed from having led a committee accused of wartime propaganda. The argument that Lord Bryce, with his experience and power, was not an active player but a passive recipient of a request to produce the Blue Book on the treatment of Armenians is not plausible. To say that had he known the political reality "he would have declined" either shows that Toynbee still remained ignorant on this matter even in his old age or indicates an attempt to cover up other aspects of the issue. ¹⁰

Uncritical readers of Toynbee's reflections on the past would thank him for his candor in describing the role of propaganda in the matter of massacre narratives and Germany's third-party role in the terrible fate of the Armenians. But they would come out completely unaware of the deeply rooted involvement that Britain, as a third-party great power, had in the creation and intensification of the Turco-Armenian conflict, leading up to its tragic climax during World War I. While the British made a clear attempt to hold the Germans accountable for what they could have done but did not do as an influential third party during the war, they themselves have gone free of charges made against what they actually had done as a Great Power since the 1870s.

JAMES BRYCE'S TURCOPHOBIA

Throughout the years leading up to World War I certain British politicians made attempts to conceal their own interests while impacting the lives of the Ottoman Armenians. After the Ottoman defeat in the Balkan Wars Bryce and his associates in the British Armenia Committee thought that the timing was right to come out with a publication to pressure the Turks on the Armenian Question. According to the committee's publication, this pressuring of the Turks to carry out reforms was done on behalf of the Armenians, for their "peace, prosperity, and honour." It focused on Britain's "responsibilities and duties" toward the Armenian people as if the committee's involvement was a result of an altruistic devotion to the welfare of Armenians. 11 In a similar vein Bryce campaigned for American action in the matter of promoting Armenian nationalism, always aware of the significance of public opinion, especially in the United States. He wrote in a popular American magazine that despite the views held by the press in continental Europe, "in interfering on behalf of the Armenians England has not, and cannot have, any selfish motive."12

The tone was dramatically different and more open about real British interests when the Armenian Question as a concept of British foreign policy first saw life, with the aim of gaining the support of fellow British subjects at home and defeating Benjamin Disraeli. The same Bryce who would write to Americans about Britain's selfless care for Armenians almost twenty years later had already assured his British readers in 1877 that "the strongest barrier that could be erected against her [Russia's] further advance would be found in the creation among the subjects of Turkey of communities which would be unwilling to exchange a state of tolerable prosperity and peace under local institutions and officials of their own faith, protected by the Western Powers, for the pressure of the Russian bureaucracy and the Russian Church." He added that this would mean "regaining and strengthening the legitimate influence of England in the East." 13 Similarly, his contemporary John S. Stuart-Glennie examined the strife within the Ottoman state and saw an opportunity for Britain to "issue from this revolutionary conflict the head of the confederated English-speaking nations, and Empress still of India; and having by a gradual transformation, or but brief revolution, accomplished within herself the social change imminent in the very facts of her economic development."14 Akaby Nassibian confirms that Britain handled Turkey in full consideration of its rivalry with Russia in the East, having in mind that "India was Britain's most precious possession," second only to the navy in maintaining empire status. 15 Arman J. Kirakossian's examination

of the late 1870s also leads to a view of the clear "consequences for British interests in the Near East and India" in case of "a Russian takeover": "The British delegation at the Congress of Berlin used the Armenian Question exclusively to pressure Russia." ¹⁶

Charles Seymour, a historian at Yale University during World War I, captures the essence of British foreign policy as having been determined since the sixteenth century "mainly by colonial and maritime interests" and explains Britain's "apparently contradictory manifestations" by way of this "guiding principle." Therefore the seemingly confusing ebb and flow in Britain's involvement in the Eastern Question that left the Armenian rebels with many promises and little fulfillment may be explained by the shakiness of Britain's perception of a threat to its passage to India. Once Britain gained control of the Suez Canal in 1888, the route to India appeared safer. Egypt became the key to British dominion in the East. Consequently the Russians became less of a threat, but Germany's growing strength with the turn of the century posed a new threat in the Near East. Once again pro-Armenian sentiments surfaced in Britain, this time in the interest of improving relations with Russia as an ally. 18

The effective incitement by the Balkan Committee during the years that led to the Balkan Wars (under the leadership of the same people who ran the British Armenia Committee, James Bryce and Noel Buxton) involved the utilization of politicians, journalists, academics, and members of the clergy to apply pressure in favor of the Balkan revolt. 19 The committee led the way in the agitation against the Ottoman rule in the Balkans.²⁰ This gave credence to the notion that similar British interference in Ottoman affairs relating to the Armenians was not a reflection of unique pro-Armenian sentiment but consistent with an anti-Ottoman endeavor. Not only is it accurate to state that, guided by its own interests, "the English government was much less concerned with the Armenians than with the country they inhabited," as William L. Langer, Harvard historian, concluded in 1935.²¹ We might also venture to say that any emotionality ascribed to the manner in which influential British Liberals conducted themselves in the matter of the Armenian Question was not out of love for the Armenian but out of hate for the Turk.

The strong dislike for Turks is evident in Bryce's own writings, which reveal long-held Islamophobic views based on vulgar stereotypical thinking. Bryce forgets the medieval Muslim state of Al-Andalus,²² which for over seven centuries ran a society of remarkable cultural and scientific feats in which Jews thrived more than under any other Christian rule during that period.²³ Bryce claimed: "No Mohammedan race or dynasty has ever shown itself able to govern well even subjects of its own religion."

The Turkish brand of Muslim rule in particular, he said, is characterized by "sluggishness, incapacity, favouritism, and corruption." In a display of arrogance and racism, Bryce stated that if one were to "take the race as a whole,...they appear hopelessly stupid, apathetic, helpless." Comparing Christians and Muslims in the region, he concluded that even "after ages of slavery and ignorance, the Christian population nevertheless offers a more hopeful prospect than the Muslims" and that Christians are more industrious than Muslims. Just over a decade before World War I, while giving a racially based lecture at Oxford, Bryce asked his audience to "[c]onceive what a difference it might make if Islam were within two centuries to disappear from the earth!" He assured them: "The thing is not impossible: perhaps not even improbable."

Bryce and his Turcophobic associates may have found their racial inspiration in the writings of Edward Augustus Freeman, a professor of history at Oxford University.²⁶ He was a close friend of Liberal leader William Ewart Gladstone.²⁷ In a book that focuses entirely on the Ottoman state, Freeman brought paranoia and racism together. In consideration of Benjamin Disraeli's position as prime minister he charged: "Throughout the East, the Turk and the Jew are leagued against the Christian," adding that this "alliance runs through all Europe." To him, the Turk and the Jew stood out in Europe because they were not of "the one common Aryan stock." Therefore their presence was "incidental." Expressing a relentless rejection of a future for the Turk in Europe, long before the Balkan Wars and World War I, Freeman blended hateful aspects as he argued that "the Turk has no share in that original kindred of race and language which binds together all the European nations" and that "no Mahometan nation can really become part of the same community of nations as the Christian nations of Europe."28

Such a strong conviction that the Turks were inferior could lead us to believe that the pro-Armenian stance in Britain between the 1870s and World War I was a factor of Christian Islamophobic vehemence rather than a calculated estimation of Britain's foreign interests. The existing analysis varies greatly. Some offer a narrative in which the intervention was genuinely "on behalf of the Ottoman Empire's Christian population." Others view Britain's actions as "partly through zeal for Christianity, but mostly in their own interests." Still others do not shy away from cynical yet grounded observations: "Organizations like the Anglo-Armenian Committee and the Evangelical Alliance made the most of the religious aspect of the Armenian question."

Without having to guess exactly how close religion was to the hearts of the main actors in the British campaign against the Turks, British

Liberals clearly had two strong reasons to use the religious aspect for their own political interests. First, an emphasis on religion divided the national identity within the Ottoman state between Muslim and Christian populations. Bryce thought it a "wise policy" to "seek the elevation of the native races" in the Ottoman territory,³² and the Christian identifier provided the most obvious and readily available platform to do just that. Second, an emphasis on religion magnified the support for Gladstone and the Liberal Party by the church in Britain.³³ Therefore it should come as no surprise that the Buxton brothers emphasized (in a book prefaced by Bryce in 1914) that the English as Christians "have a special concern in the Church of the Armenians, arising from various points of contact, moral, ecclesiastical and political."

Whether religion served as a pretext for British influence or as the driving force itself, there were undeniably many critical points of contact. Yet, stunningly, Toynbee attempted to deny just that two years later during World War I and erased decades of political contact by claiming in the Blue Book: "The War has brought us into a new relation with Armenia and the Armenian people.... We had no living contact, no natural relation, with Armenia in our personal or even in our political life." He claimed this despite years of pro-Armenian campaigning under Gladstone, Britain's most prominent political figure at the time, who even "articulated a policy of lone intervention." Gladstone dedicated his final meaningful speech "in order to urge action in the Armenian's favour."

CONFLICT INTENSIFIED

Britain's political interference with Ottoman affairs manifested itself in calls for reforms more than it did in threats of war. This has led more recent proponents of the Armenian case to emphasize the seemingly modest imposition of these reforms, in order to downplay the intensity of the threat to Ottoman sovereignty. From the perspective of the sovereign Ottomans, however, these were never attempts to reform but rather to deform. Bryce, for example, never truly believed that reform was possible: "In Turkey the men and the system are equally corrupt and to try to reform the Turkish monarchy is like trying to repair a ship with rotten timbers." When he tried to convince the Americans to join the European powers in reform efforts, he meant the introduction of "administrative and judicial reforms" that would have involved posting "a European governor who should be irremovable except with the consent of those powers." ³⁹

In other words these reforms essentially called for European control over Ottoman land: "reforming an Ottoman government" meant removing Turkish officials and "putting Europeans in their place." The Buxtons confirmed this view, saying that "the form of control is immaterial" just as long as "the man in real authority should be a European subject, responsible to a European Government or Governments alone." Most likely, the European reform would more specifically be carried out by Russians, who would "occupy the tableland of Armenia" and provide "order, security and elementary justice." In the context of the Great Powers' Eurocentric perception of the Near East, this would have meant the demise of Ottoman sovereignty. Well ahead of his time in comparison to the other anti-Ottoman activists, before the turn of the century, the Duke of Argyll realized that Britain could not strike Constantinople alone and had to seek the cooperation of Russia, as if planning World War I and the fall of the Ottoman Empire twenty years in advance.

Therefore it was sensible for the Ottoman state to fear that it was not only literally losing ground but also under threat of losing its very existence as a sovereign state. This threat was made vivid by the combination of recent scars and increasing trouble. The Turks were already haunted by the experience of the Bulgarian insurrection and the overwhelming new brand of third-party interference that it introduced. The response to the Armenian atrocities in 1895 repeated the outcry that followed the Bulgarian atrocities. 43 This stirred a concern among the Turks that the same level of third-party interference would also repeat itself. Evidence from Britain shows that it did exactly that: the same influential anti-Ottoman politicians who assembled in protest back in 1876, such as Gladstone and the Duke of Argyll, assembled again and exactly in the same place. They demanded action against the Ottoman sovereign, even if it meant military intervention.44 These gatherings were filled by members of pro-Armenian societies and showcased their growing numbers. Bryce described the ominousness of these societies as far as the Ottoman sovereign was concerned in late 1895. He considered it a sign of Armenian national momentum that they "have formed secret societies, and that the representatives of Armenian patriotic committees in two or three cities of continental Europe have been moving about Asiatic Turkey trying to rouse their fellow-countrymen."45 Bryce's own anti-Ottoman committees had proven to be highly effective.⁴⁶

Even when these committees were staffed by Armenians they were still vitally influenced by outside forces. The connection between the growth "in depth and in strength" of Armenian national zeal and "the

influence of Western ideas" is made by Bryce himself.⁴⁷ Robert College, an institute of higher learning financed by Americans to offer education for the Ottoman Christian communities, opened in 1863 and served as a venue for new inspirations and aspirations of Western origins. The young Armenians who went there began to see themselves in a stronger Christian light, which played into the hands of the British Liberals who aired anti-Islamic views and considered stronger Christian identity throughout the Ottoman territory to be instrumental for budding national identity. Just as Robert College groomed the leaders of Bulgaria's future independent state, they hoped that the Armenians would be similarly influenced and successful.⁴⁸ During the first forty years of Robert College's operation, the number of Armenian students was second only to the number of Bulgarians.⁴⁹

As Langer and others have pointed out, however, the Bulgarians were concentrated in one region of the Ottoman Empire, while the Armenians were not the majority anywhere in the land. Moreover, there was a strong sense that the Armenians also could not really connect among themselves on a cultural level: the big city dwellers had little in common with the rural villagers. An editorial in Britain's Conservative magazine the *Spectator* shows how those in Britain who were bent on establishing an Armenian nation denied certain facts that indicated a history of peaceful assimilation: To organise a community so scattered, and with such remote traditions of separate national life, is no light task. Even the language has been in many parts forgotten, and Turkish has been adopted. It is rare to find an Armenian anywhere who uses his own language in counting beyond fifty."

Although the Armenians might boast a proud tradition, they were far removed from being united around it. This reveals the determination of the British Liberals, who labored to instill in the Armenians a national identity that would lead by its very essence to an immediate conflict of interests with the Turks and thereby shape the Caucasus and the Balkans according to British designs.

Before these outside forces became so influential in inspiring Armenian nationalism and pressuring the Turks to recognize it, the Ottoman Armenians did not see any reason to challenge the sovereign and, correspondingly, did not suffer from designed ill treatment. It was the change prompted by the British that brought about a dramatic increase in bloodshed. Prior to the effects of this change, Bryce himself confessed that the Armenians were an "inoffensive people, who have never meditated insurrection" and that whatever harm done to them as a community prior

to the late 1870s resulted from "spontaneous acts of irregular soldiers" that were not ordered or approved by generals.⁵³ In the state in which Bryce found them in the 1870s the Armenians were not rebellious at all, because they were an unarmed, sparse population that lacked a national spirit. Bryce considered it the task of the European powers to change that.⁵⁴ Before Bryce's World War I policy of making it seem as if Britain was not involved in the circumstances that led to the Armenian fate,⁵⁵ he wrote openly about the change in Turco-Armenian relations, admitting: "Before the Treaty of Berlin the Sultan had no special enmity to the Armenians, nor had the Armenian nation any political aspirations."56 He understood that "[t]he result of this growth of national Armenian sentiment has been to alarm the Turks." ⁵⁷ The official American report on the condition of the Armenians, written after World War I, observed with clarity that peace would have been kept if not for outside instigation: "There is much to show that, left to themselves, the Turk and the Armenian when left without official instigation have hitherto been able to live together in peace. Their existence side by side on the same soil for five centuries unmistakably indicates their interdependence and mutual interest."58

Moreover, evidence indicates that the British not only were negatively affecting Turco-Armenian relations by inciting the Armenians and pressuring the Turks but were fully aware of how their action led to blood-shed—and still kept at it.

Bryce was well aware of the direct link between the way in which "England's interference embittered the Turks" and the Turkish "resolve to be rid of them [the Armenians] altogether."59 He knew in detail from his meetings with the Armenian patriarch Nerses and many other leaders of Armenian communities in Constantinople in 1880 just how large a role European interference played in enabling the Armenian rise. Moreover, he could measure the increase in aggravation as a result of British actions (along with Russia). Had it not been for the initial British involvement via the Treaty of Berlin stipulations and the Anglo-Turkish Convention the Armenians "would have been spared the storm of fire, famine, and slaughter which descended upon them in 1895, their women would not have been outraged, their priests martyred, their children led into captivity, their religion over large districts, utterly blotted out."60 Bryce was able to predict that more protesting by the Armenians could mean more bloodshed.⁶¹ This awareness of the link between British intrigues and the misfortune that followed for both Armenians and Turks was also expressed by the British ambassador to the Porte, William White, in 1888,

before the 1895 massacres.⁶² After the 1895 massacres the Buxton brothers reiterated the connection between European agitation and Armenian massacres.⁶³ More poignantly, David Lloyd George, who became Britain's prime minister mid-war in late 1916, demonstrated the moral burden, referring to Britain's intervention as "sinister."⁶⁴

PROVOCATION AND ITS DENIAL

Thus it was recognized not only that Britain was involved in creating an environment for massacres through pesky calls for impossible reforms but that it also exploited the massacres during World War I.65 Nassibian nonetheless maintains that Britain's position in the Armenian Question reflects a moral choice. He would rather refer to it as having been a "moral issue" in British politics, 66 as if the plight of the Armenians was a moral stance and the military inactivity was a political stance. A sincere moral stance, however, would have meant taking action to spare the lives of Armenian victims by ceasing to intensify the pressure on the Turks. Caleb Frank Gates's position serves as an example of a solid moral stance. Gates, who served as the president of Robert College during World War I and the Armenian tragedy, explained in his memoir that he clearly sympathized with the Armenians. Yet when approached by representatives of the Friends of Armenia organization who sought his support for an Armenian republic he maintained a sober and morally responsible view and said that "it was out of the question," because he could "understand the language of accomplished facts."67

Instead Britain acted as if it did not understand the limbo in which it left the Armenians. The relationship of cause and effect was well known to Bryce: "foreign armies...are welcomed as deliverers by the subject population; and when they retreat, it is upon those unhappy subjects that the inhuman vengeance of the Turkish soldiery is wreaked." Yet Britain kept the Armenians caught between the promise of action and the reality of inaction. As predicted by all, it compromised the lives of many Armenians. This push and pull between hope and despair had to do with the European powers that "issued statements, made promises, and urged reforms" but "never took firm action to force the Porte to carry out its obligations under the Treaty of Berlin," because they could not agree on a specific course of action. But the Armenians were not waiting for Europe: they were waiting for Britain, from whom they had received false encouragement. "The British Fleet never cast anchor in the Bosphorus to

protect the Armenians, and by the close of the century the condition of the latter had deteriorated beyond measure."⁷¹

For reasons that cannot be explained as a sign of care for the wellbeing of Armenians, the increasingly strong pro-Armenian committees continued to call for Armenian rebellion in the twentieth century, despite the bitter learning experience of the late nineteenth century. The actions of a former Russian general, Arthur Tcherep Spiridovitch (Cherep Spiridovich), who suddenly burst into the scene of mainstream Turcophobic lobbying and made a splash in the American newspapers in 1907–8, epitomizes this reckless endangerment of Armenian lives.⁷² Spiridovitch arranged for an audience of pro-Armenian activists to meet at the Lyric Hall in New York on May 19, 1907, in order to call for an organized revolt against the Turks, employing committees in London and Paris and exciting the New York branch of the Henchakiss (Hunchak) Revolutionary Party. 73 The very title of his book that came out in 1913 called for a Europe without Turkey. Spiridovitch wrote that between 1901 and 1913, as president of the Slavic Society of Moscow (and the Freedom Committee in the United States), he had mobilized Albanians, Arabs, Armenians, and Macedonians toward insurrection and now wished to give the French fifteen reasons why they should rid Europe of Turks.⁷⁴

The young Armenians paid close attention to the constant calls for the demise of Turkish rule coming out of the world's most powerful cities and bought into the British talk in particular. Like moths to a flame, they became increasingly attracted to fiery confrontations with the Turks, believing that intensification would force Britain and others to shift from words to action. On the eve of World War I the most vocal Turcophobes in Britain reported that the Armenians had become convinced that agitation was in their favor. 75 Even before the massacres of the late nineteenth century the Armenians "embraced the idea of armed struggle" with full awareness of "the logic of history in the nineteenth century—armed resistance is the means of realizing national aspirations." 76 Nassibian concurs that "the Armenian revolutionary groups were under somewhat of an illusion that demonstrations or terroristic acts might result in the intervention of the European powers."⁷⁷ But it must also be stressed that the European powers and Britain in particular had already intervened and created a point of no return through incitement to rebellion and threats to use force. 78 This led to unrectifiable Turco-Armenian relations, thereby giving the Armenians a sense that they had no other recourse but revolutionary activity.⁷⁹ The Armenians were already bent on seditiousness

due to previous British political interventions.⁸⁰ Now they were hoping to force a head-on collision in order to hasten an actual British attack against the Turks.

Despite the strong evidence of Armenian revolutionary efforts, however, Nassibian wants his readers to believe that they were a "pretext for, rather than the cause of," the massacres both in the late nineteenth century and in World War I.⁸¹ He is actually borrowing a formula of propaganda established by Britain via Toynbee and Bryce in the Blue Book, which said that for the Turks "the war was merely an opportunity and not a cause" for forcing out Armenians.⁸² This formula was also picked up by J. Missakian: "The war, far from being the cause, was the opportunity that the Turks were quick to seize." Nassibian turned this into a mantra, as if to make it true by repetition.

More perplexing is how Toynbee's wildly false statement that the Armenian disaster came "without a shadow of provocation" would evolve into Robert Melson's treatment of the provocation as a mere "thesis." 84 There is no scholarly reason to doubt that provocation provokes, but Melson argues that the Armenian rebellion did not make a difference and is willing to assume a logically flawed worldview to make his point. In his mind, saying that the Armenians should have acted "less threateningly" to avoid their mistreatment is like saying that the Jews should have acted less threateningly to save themselves from the Holocaust. The argument that Armenian lives would have been spared had they not rebelled seems to him like claiming that "had there been fewer Jewish Communists, or bankers, or department store owners, or journalists, or beggars there would have been no Holocaust."85 In other words, for the sake of his analogy Melson is here channeling the most basic anti-Semitic creed: merely by occupying a certain job as a contributing member of society (be it as a social theorist, banker, or a journalist) the Jew is equated to a seditious rebel who threatens a sovereign state. Just because the state in both cases perceived a threat does not mean that in both cases the victim gave equal reason for it. 86 Precisely here lies one of the key differences between the two cases: the Ottoman Armenian rebelled, the German Jew simply went to work.

Jeremy Salt observed that in the struggle between the Armenian rebels and the stronger Ottoman sovereign "[t]he Christian world was indeed shocked by 'the retaliation,' but not at all by the provocation." This still rings true in the academic world. One way in which to drown out the provocation is to search for sensational evidence of brutality against Armenians through emphasis on the suffering of women and children,

inspired by the Blue Book.⁸⁸ This emphasis, which Horace Peterson found to be characteristic of British propaganda,⁸⁹ overlooks Armenian provocations. Such provocations are clearly described in a letter dated December 23, 1893, by Cyrus Hamlin, an American missionary and the first president of Robert College.⁹⁰ He wrote to warn other missionaries against the "evil and suffering" caused by the secretive and deceitful Armenian revolutionary party. In the letter he specified that an Armenian had presented before him a scheme, according to which "Huntchaguist [Hunchak] bands, organized all over the Empire, will watch their opportunity to kill Turks and Koords [Kurds], set fire to their villages, and then make their escape into the mountains. The enraged Moslems will then rise and fall upon the defenseless Armenians and slaughter them with such barbarities that Russia will enter, in the name of humanity and Christian civilization, and take possession."⁹¹

Shockingly, the blood of women and children, the most dreadful scenario of any loss in battle, was desired as effective provocation by Armenians who were determined to rebel: "[Europe] will listen to our cry when it goes up in the shrieks and blood of millions of women and children."

For Melson, minimizing the significance of Armenian provocation is consistent with his mission to fabricate commonalities between the Holocaust and the massacre of the Armenians. For instance, Melson misinterprets Bernard Lewis's clear view that the atrocities were a result of conflict. Lewis stated that "Turkish and Armenian villages, inextricably mixed, had for centuries lived in neighbourly association. Now a desperate struggle between them began—a struggle between two nations for the possession of a single homeland, that ends with the terrible holocaust of 1915, when a million and a half Armenians perished."93 Melson does a great injustice to Lewis's words by taking his reference to a "holocaust" out of context: "Indeed, he [Lewis] refers to the Armenian Genocide as a 'holocaust' in clear allusion to the Final Solution." This is either a shameful misrepresentation on Melson's part or an embarrassing display of ignorance. The word "holocaust" did not have a particular association with the systematic murder of Jews in World War II until the 1960s. 94 It is unlikely that Lewis, writing in 1961, made reference to the Final Solution. This misconception, whether innocent or intentional, is part of Melson's effort to liken the Armenians as victims to the fate of the Jews in World War II, so that he may deny that the Armenians posed a major threat to the Turks in the years leading up to World War I. 95 If the Armenian threat is evaluated in a fair manner that does not isolate it from the context of

Britain, France, and Russia, however, then it is clear that the Armenians not only posed a threat but played a role in a third party's plot, in which the targeted victims were the Turks.

Provocation denialists have adopted their line of argument from the very third party that orchestrated the conflict: Britain. Toynbee's deceitful presentation of the Armenians as harmless and peaceable was designed as propaganda to deny the Turks the right to prevent the destruction of their sovereign state. ⁹⁶ This has dominated aspects of the pro-Armenian arguments, which in essence are a continuation of Britain's wartime propaganda. Instead of conducting fresh research on the events, the inclination is to follow the path of the Blue Book and insist that it is baseless to contend that "the Armenians took up arms to undermine the security of the Ottoman Empire" and that there was "certainly no conspiracy to create internal unrest at a time when Turkey was engaged in the battle-field." Such a position is easily discredited by letters showing the steady dialogue between Armenian leaders and European representatives during World War I.

BRITISH INVOLVEMENT AND GREAT POWER RESPONSIBILITY

The collection of Boghos Nubar's papers is a valuable source on the dealings between one of the main leaders of the Armenian national movement and the British government. In a memorandum submitted to the Foreign Office on July 16, 1915, Nubar spoke openly about just how big a role the Armenians did play in toppling the Ottoman Empire. He boasted about how "forty percent of the soldiers in the Russian army in the Caucasus were Armenians, apart from 10,000 volunteers, who were under the command of General Andranik [on behalf of the Armenian national movement]."98 Similarly, a document dated October 27, 1916, shows the negotiations between Nubar and François Georges-Picot, a French diplomat, over what the Armenians should gain in return for the enlistment of volunteers. Under Bryce's supervision, Nubar also had official meetings with employees of the British Foreign Office.⁹⁹ Bryce's Blue Book states that "there was no Armenian revolt at Van." But a document from Dr. Hagop Zavriev of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation to Nubar, dated August 3, 1915, quotes Bryce as saying that the occupation of Van by Armenians is "a great advantage at their disposal." If the Armenians "occupy two or three more cities," then their voice will be "heard at the conference, which will decide their future." 101

The Nubar collection also provides an important indication of Bryce's control over the actions of the Armenian leadership during World War I. One document dated July 15, 1915, offers a record of a meeting between Nubar and Bryce, who advised Nubar "to coax Greek susceptibility" by producing a memorandum that would include, among other specific elements, "a separate paragraph on the massacres." 102

The disturbing politicization of the Armenian massacres is exposed more definitively in a meeting in London on July 2, 1915. In the midst of Armenian suffering Nubar was more intent on talking about land and autonomy plans rather than safety for the exiled. Bryce said that he planned to prepare a memorandum about the Armenian Question, "but he had to wait for the right moment to do so." ¹⁰³ Only political interest, rather than genuine care, would explain why timing was a consideration when the Armenian communities were in desperate need of immediate assistance. ¹⁰⁴

Considering this ample evidence, it is peculiar that Donald Bloxham would disparage arguments that look at the role played by third-party powers to explain the conflict between the Turks and the Armenians. Bloxham attempts to refute such emphasis on outside responsibility by calling it the work of "apologists for the Ottoman state" but gives no substantial reason why the political maneuvering of a power such as Britain, which navigated the Armenians into conflict with their Ottoman sovereign, does not entail responsibility for the bloodshed that followed as anticipated. Instead he presents a defective dichotomy: the Great Powers are historically and morally responsible for the fate of the Armenians, but the Ottoman state alone is criminally or legally responsible.¹⁰⁵

It is not clear on what grounds Bloxham bases his legal opinion. Legal responsibility is a complex matter that is bound to be more complicated when it involves retroactive legislation. According to one of the most influential legal philosophers of the twentieth century, Lon Fuller, retroactive legislation is bound to be a failing endeavor in any legal system. ¹⁰⁶ If a retrospective jurisprudential discussion took place, however, a discussion that is lacking in Bloxham's work, it could not be ignored that the implications of third-party involvement in a crime such as homicide should have parallel implications on the international scale. In 1947 Raphael Lemkin tried to explain genocide as a crime by saying that it is "a denial of the right of existence to entire human groups in the same sense as homicide is a denial to an individual of his right to live." ¹⁰⁷ If a third party's involvement by way of endangerment in a homicide case amounts to an offense and alters the degree of the assailant's criminal culpability, why

not view the parallel international type of endangerment as having the same level of legal responsibility?

Endangerment refers to an act or an instance of putting someone or something in danger or exposure to peril or harm. In U.S. law endangerment consists of several types of crimes involving conduct that is wrongful and reckless or wanton and likely to produce death or grievous bodily harm to another person. The illegality of the offense is intended to prohibit and therefore deter reckless or wanton conduct that wrongfully creates a substantial risk of death or serious injury to others. Endangerment can range from a misdemeanor to a felony. 108

Based on the substantial evidence shown here, a strong argument can be made that in the case of the Armenian fate in World War I prominent British Liberals may be guilty of wanton or reckless endangerment, as they knowingly endangered the lives of many Armenians by inciting rebellion and creating a conflict between them and the Turks despite the foreseeable bloodshed.

The consideration of Britain's responsibility in the massacres of the Armenians has been completely abandoned by those claiming sole Ottoman responsibility since World War I for four main reasons. First, Britain, as the victor, was a Great Power that could advance the interests of Armenian nationalists after the war. It was unthinkable for the Armenian leaders to make any accusations against Britain because that would be politically counterproductive. Second, on the basis of Britain's involvement in the Armenian revolt and the promises of land and autonomy made to the Armenians throughout the years leading up to World War I Armenians must have perceived that the British politicians with whom they had already established working relations were indebted to them and their national cause. Therefore it would be senseless to attempt any accusations against Britain just as the Armenians were about to get rewarded. Third, the perception all over the world that Britain (and in particular Bryce) played a heroic part in striving to end Armenian suffering made it seem absurd to consider Bryce a villain, even though in truth he was pretending to put out a fire that he himself had intentionally started. Finally, those with Islamophobic convictions were tempted to pursue the narrative that the massacres were the result of pure Muslim intolerance of Christian minorities, engraining this idea through the use of the term "genocide."

It is important to consider the legal concept of endangerment in relation to the events in World War I, however, not just out of fairness to history. It is also necessary to prohibit and deter similar instances in the future when a major power might feel inclined to sacrifice the lives of many victims by inciting and facilitating rebellion in order to create strife within a sovereign nation and thereby meet its own political interests. In terms of the fate of Armenians in World War I, the greater intention that affected all ensuing decisions by both Armenians and Turks belonged to the British who designed the conflict and not to those who came up with terrible ways to react to it.

If the international law's equivalent of murder is genocide, then the charge against the Ottomans should recognize the lack of intention to destroy, just as lack of full intention reduces a murder charge to manslaughter. The Turks had no intention to kill Armenian individuals simply because they were Armenian. The bloodshed was a result of aggressive measures that would have been taken against any group that threatened the Ottoman state in this manner. It was the result of conflict and not of any intent to kill Armenians for being Armenians.¹⁰⁹ The removal of the conflict would have meant the avoidance of the Armenian tragedy. The conflict was not the design of the Ottoman sovereign but that of a third party.

The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, as adopted by Resolution (III) A of the United Nations General Assembly on December 9, 1948, mentions complicity as the only form of third-party culpability for two main reasons. ¹¹⁰ Definitionally it is not genocide when the third party is responsible for the conflict that inevitably leads to bloodshed, as in the case of Britain in the Armenian tragedy. The primary intention lies with the third party itself and not with the assailants, making the "intent to destroy" not applicable to the Ottoman sovereign. The major powers dominate the international scene politically and have constructed the Genocide Convention in a way that would not incriminate them.

For the future prevention of bloodshed it is vital to have increased discussion on the responsibilities of major powers to stay clear of encouraging and enabling rebellion against a sovereign state when it is certain that this will result in the massacre of the rebellion groups and those indirectly associated with them as the sovereign state tries to ensure its survival as such. The case of Britain as a Great Power with Armenian blood on its hands is one example of why there must be greater effort to deter current major powers from committing the same moral offense of endangering the lives of many, even when confronting a faulty regime. As cautioned by William T. R. Fox, who introduced the term "super powers" in 1944, "States, like individuals, should have an equal right to protection in a system of law." Super powers among states, like rich individuals, should not be impervious to legal accountability.

NOTES

- 1. Arnold J. Toynbee, Armenian Atrocities, 106, 109, 117 (quotation).
- 2. Horace Peterson, *Propaganda for War*, 53; Gary S. Messinger, *British Propaganda and the State in the First World War*, 83–84.
- 3. Peterson, Propaganda for War, 58.
- 4. Arnold J. Toynbee, The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, 1915–1916.
- 5. James Morgan Read, Atrocity Propaganda, 1914–1919, 216.
- 6. Akaby Nassibian, Britain and the Armenian Question, 1915–1923, 69–70, 79.
- 7. Read, Atrocity Propaganda, 216.
- 8. Arnold J. Toynbee, *Acquaintances*, 151–52.
- 9. Ibid., 153.
- 10. Ibid.
- 11. British Armenia Committee, Armenia, 1.
- 12. James Bryce, "The Armenian Question," 154.
- 13. James Bryce, Transcaucasia and Ararat, 412, 443, 444.
- 14. John S. Stuart-Glennie, Europe and Asia, 541.
- 15. Nassibian, *Britain and the Armenian Question*, 5–6. He also adds that any concern about misrule in the Ottoman state was sidestepping the real interest in the territory as a "buffer against Russian expansion and influence," 67.
- 16. Arman J. Kirakossian, British Diplomacy and the Armenian Question, 339-40.
- 17. Charles Seymour, *The Diplomatic Background of the War, 1870–1914*, 115–16.
- 18. Ibid., 197–99.
- 19. F. M Leventhal, The Last Dissenter, 49.
- 20. L.S. Stavrianos, "The Balkan Committee," 258. His impression that "so little is known of the organization which has played so prominent a role in Balkan affairs" still rings true today.
- 21. William L. Langer, The Diplomacy of Imperialism, 1890–1902, 147–61.
- 22. See Maria Rosa Menocal, The Ornament of the World.
- 23. The identity label "Sephardic" Jew, meaning Spanish Jew, as a signifier of origin for many Jews to this very day is a testament of the great pride that Jews took in their role in the society of Al-Andalus.
- 24. Bryce, *Transcaucasia and Ararat*, 425, 458, 427, 442.
- 25. James Bryce, The Romans Lecture 1902, 46.
- 26. Freeman's views on the Turks appear to be well read by influential Liberal figures. The Duke of Argyll and the British Armenia Committee cite him in confirmation of his views: Duke of Argyll, Our Responsibilities for Turkey, 62; British Armenia Committee, Armenia, 24. Personal letters were also exchanged between Freeman and Bryce: Anthony S. Wohl, "Dizzi-Ben-Dizzi," 405–6.
- Wohl, "'Dizzi-Ben-Dizzi," 399, in a clique that Wohl describes as being anti-Semitic.
- 28. Edward A. Freeman, *The Ottoman Power in Europe*, xix, 4, xvii, 41, 56.
- Vatche Ghazarian, ed. and trans., Boghos Nubar's Papers and the Armenian Question, 1915–1918, xxii.
- 30. Enver Ziya Karal, The Armenian Question (1878-1923), 14.
- 31. Langer, The Diplomacy of Imperialism, 161.

- 32. Bryce, Transcaucasia and Ararat, 442.
- 33. Stavrianos, "The Balkan Committee," 258.
- 34. Noel Buxton and Harold Buxton, Travel and Politics in Armenia, 97.
- 35. Toynbee, The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, 593.
- 36. Jeremy Salt, Imperialism, Evangelism and the Ottoman Armenians, 1878–1896, 129.
- 37. Buxton and Buxton, Travel and Politics in Armenia, 124.
- 38. Nassibian, *Britain and the Armenian Question*, 23–24. Nassibian chooses to stress Turkish opposition to modernity and equality rather than stressing the aggressive nature of the interference by Britain and the other European powers.
- 39. Bryce, "The Armenian Question," 153, 154.
- 40. Ibid., 154.
- 41. Buxton and Buxton, Travel and Politics in Armenia, 140, 50-51.
- 42. Argyll, Our Responsibilities, 71.
- 43. Langer, The Diplomacy of Imperialism, 159, 161.
- 44. Salt, *Imperialism, Evangelism, and the Ottoman Armenians*, 124. Salt also shows an illuminating drawing from *Punch* (May 18, 1895), a popular satirical magazine in Britain at the time, in which the Duke of Argyll and William Gladstone appear as two crusaders. The caption has "Armenia, 1895" next to "Bulgaria, 1876," putting them both in the same context as parallels, meaning that the outcome of the Armenian episode will end with Ottoman humiliation as did the previous episode.
- 45. Bryce, "The Armenian Question," 151.
- Stavrianos talks of Bryce's London-based Balkan Committee as having "acquired a legendary fame" in central and Eastern Europe: Stavrianos, "The Balkan Committee," 266.
- 47. Bryce, Transcaucasia and Ararat, 470.
- 48. Ibid., 504.
- 49. Caleb Frank Gates, Not to Me Only, 168.
- 50. Langer, *The Diplomacy of Imperialism*, 147. This was the finding of the American Commission: James G. Harbord, *Conditions in the Near East*, 7.
- 51. Langer, The Diplomacy of Imperialism, 150.
- 52. Spectator (1890), August 9, 173. Language is a significant reflector of national unity, so this analysis showing that the language component was lacking among Armenians is telling of an absence of national vigor prior to the outside influence, which mainly came from Gladstonian Liberals in Britain. During World War I official Britain would conceal that a change in the modern Armenian use of their own language ever occurred: Toynbee, The Treatment of Armenians, 597.
- 53. Bryce, Transcaucasia and Ararat, 425.
- 54. Ibid., 324-25.
- 55. Even on the eve of World War I, while writing the preface for the Buxton brothers' book, Bryce notes that the Turkish war with Russia and the Bulgarian deliverance aroused Sultan Abdülhamid's fear and suspicion, though he conveniently fails to mention Britain's role. Buxton and Buxton, Travel and Politics in Armenia, viii-ix.
- 56. Bryce, Transcaucasia and Ararat, 523. The American postwar report also shows an understanding that the story of the tragic Armenian fate in World War I starts with the developments in Europe and the sudden European interest in the Near East in the eighteenth century. Harbord, Conditions in the Near East, 6.

- 57. Bryce, "The Armenian Question," 152.
- 58. Harbord, Conditions in the Near East, 10.
- 59. Bryce, Transcaucasia and Ararat, 523.
- 60. Ibid., 469-70, 444-45, 524 (quotation).
- 61. Kirakossian discusses this in the context of Bryce's exchange with James Ferguson, who took over his position as undersecretary of state for foreign affairs: Kirakossian, *British Diplomacy and the Armenian Question*, 160.
- 62. Ibid., 149.
- 63. Buxton and Buxton, Travel and Politics in Armenia, 126.
- 64. David Lloyd George, The Truth about the Peace Treaties, 1256.
- 65. Ghazarian, Boghos Nubar's Papers, xxii, xxix.
- 66. Nassibian, Britain and the Armenian Question, 33, 38.
- 67. Gates, Not to Me Only, 288.
- 68. Bryce, Transcaucasia and Ararat, 425.
- 69. Louise Nalbandian, The Armenian Revolutionary Movement, 84.
- 70. Nassibian, Britain and the Armenian Question, 19.
- 71. J. Missakian, A Searchlight on the Armenian Question, 1878–1950, 12.
- 72. Spiridovitch, whose name is at times spelled differently, is under-researched. The evaluation of his involvement is based on his appearance in the media and his own writings.
- 73. New York Times, May 20, 1907: http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf ?res=9C06E0DC133EE033A25753C2A9639C946697D6CF. The Chicago Examiner, April 18, 1908, 5, described the Turks as Spiridovitch's "particular abomination": http://cdm16818.contentdm.oclc.org/utils/getarticleclippings/collection/examiner/id/9037/articleId/DIVL379/compObjId/9049/lang/en_US/dmtext/.
- 74. Arthur Tcherep-Spiridovitch, L'Europe sans Turquie, 152, 6, 148, 157, 69.
- 75. Buxton and Buxton, Travel and Politics in Armenia, 127.
- 76. Ghazarian, Boghos Nubar's Papers, xxi.
- 77. Nassibian, Britain and the Armenian Question, 19.
- 78. This presents an opportunity to notice a distinction between intervention when a conflict is already ongoing and intervention that itself instigated the conflict. The former comes at a later stage and does not suggest as much responsibility. For instance, Davide Rodogno offers a strong and valid critique of the intention and performance of humanitarian intervention in the days of the Ottoman Empire and in modern-day interventions such as the one in Libya. But he does not take into account that the British, who were driven by their own interest when they looked to intervene when Armenians were massacred, were also driven by their own interest before that, when they endangered Armenians by creating and supporting the Turco-Armenian conflict: Rodogno, *Against Massacre*.
- 79. Nalbandian, The Armenian Revolutionary Movement, 84.
- 80. Salahi R. Sonyel, The Ottoman Armenians, 154.
- 81. Nassibian, Britain and the Armenian Question, 21, 31.
- 82. Toynbee, The Treatment of Armenians, 633.
- 83. Missakian, A Searchlight on the Armenian Question, 40.
- 84. Toynbee, Armenian Atrocities, 69; Robert F. Melson, Revolution and Genocide, 51.
- 85. Melson, Revolution and Genocide, 12.

- 86. Melson contends that a focus on provocation neglects the independent motivations of the perpetrators, but his very search for motivation that is independent of provocation in the conflict between the Turks and the Armenians is misguided and misleading: ibid., 142.
- 87. Salt, Imperialism, Evangelism, and the Ottoman Armenians, 123.
- 88. Toynbee, *The Treatment of Armenians*, xxv. The fate of women and children, especially infants, is likely the most painful element of being overpowered in conflict. It is interesting to note the reference in the Bible to infants being dashed against the rocks (Psalm 137:8–9). This is a symbol of cruelty against the Israelites but also the ideal form of revenge against the Babylonians. Neither means genocide but rather the most terrible cost of being dominated in war. Harbord's official report reveals that the Armenians matched the cruelty of their assailants when they had the power to do so through cooperation with the Russians: Harbord, *Conditions in the Near East*, 9.
- 89. Peterson, *Propaganda for War*, 61. In an illustration of the lengths to which the British would go to exploit the universal disgust at abuse against infants, Peterson discusses a case in which the British borrowed the details of an incident where Belgians mutilated an African infant to form a story about Germans mutilating a Belgian infant: ibid., 59–60.
- 90. Cyrus Hamlin, a devout Christian, strove for a fair depiction of Turkey in Britain and was wary of travelers who wrote reports with malign intentions in service of the interests of their political party: Hamlin, Among the Turks, 356.
- 91. United States Department of State Papers, Transmitted to Congress December 2, 1895, 1415, 1416 (quotation): http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/cgi-bin/FRUS/FRUS-idx?type=article&did=FRUS.FRUS1895p2.ioo2o&id=FRUS.FRUS1895p2&isize=M.
- 92. Ibid., 1416.
- 93. Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, 356. The first edition, which contains exactly the same passage (but lists the year 1916 not 1915), came out in 1961, while this quotation is from the second edition.
- 94. Donald Niewyk and Francis Nicosia, *The Columbia Guide to the Holocaust*, 45. Moreover, an advanced JSTOR full-text search for "holocaust" in 1961 would yield ninety-one articles in the year of Lewis's reference to holocaust, none of which refer to the Final Solution. Only one refers to the European holocaust, but at the time "holocaust" typically meant a world war. Most references were to nuclear, atomic, universal, or world holocaust.
- 95. Melson, Revolution and Genocide, 159.
- 96. Toynbee, Armenian Atrocities, 70.
- 97. Missakian, A Searchlight on the Armenian Question, 40.
- 98. Ghazarian, Boghos Nubar's Papers, 190.
- 99. Ibid., 393–96, 388. The document on these meetings is dated October 26, 1916, and suggests possible previous meetings between Nubar and Foreign Office representatives, though not as official as a meeting with the British foreign minister himself, Edward Grey.
- 100. Toynbee, The Treatment of Armenians, 627.
- 101. Ghazarian, Boghos Nubar's Papers, 248.
- 102. Ibid., 166.

- 103. Ibid., 131.
- 104. James Morgan Read writes that Britain's official preoccupation with the Armenian Question began in October of that year, six months after the deportations were initiated: Read, Atrocity Propaganda, 216.
- 105. Donald Bloxham, The Great Game of Genocide, 17-18.
- 106. Lon L. Fuller, *The Morality of Law*, 39. This is so because retroactive legislation "cannot itself guide action" and "undercuts the integrity of rules."
- 107. Raphael Lemkin, "Genocide as a Crime under International Law," 149.
- 108. http://definitions.uslegal.com/e/endangerment/.
- 109. For an extended discussion on the significance of conflict in the context of the debate on genocide, see Tal Buenos, "Genovive."
- 110. See article 3 (e): http://www.hrweb.org/legal/genocide.html.
- 111. William T. R. Fox, The Super-Powers, 143-44.

An Assessment of Armenian Claims from the Perspective of International Law

Şükrü M. Elekdağ

A great many Western historians and genocide scholars, influenced by the zealously promoted one-sided historical narrative of the Armenian advocacy groups, have described the fate of Armenians in the events that occurred in World War I in the Ottoman Empire as "genocide." But a fairly large number of reputable American and European academicians flatly refuse to do so. For instance, sixty-nine American scholars stated the following in a declaration addressed to the United States House of Representatives in 1985:

The undersigned American academicians who specialize in Turkish, Ottoman and Middle Eastern studies are concerned that the current language embodied in House Joint Resolution 192 is misleading and/or inaccurate in several respects. Specifically...we respectfully take exception to that portion of the text which singles out for special recognition:...the one and one half million people of Armenian ancestry who were victims of genocide perpetrated in Turkey between 1915 and 1923.¹

The list of the signatories of the declaration included names of eminent scholars of international standing, including Bernard Lewis, J. C. Hurewitz, Stanford Shaw, Tibor Halasi-Kun, Dankwart Rustow, Howard Reed, Frank Tachau, Philip Stoddard, Jon Mandaville, Roderic Davison, Walter Denny, Carter Findley; Avigdor Levy, Pierre Oberling, and Justin McCarthy, just to name a few. A host of European scholars such as Andrew Mango, Norman Stone, Gilles Veinstein, Arend Jan Boekestijn, Paul Dumont, and Philippe Fargues also reject the appropriateness of the label "genocide" to describe the catastrophic events of 1915.

The statement of Bernard Lewis, the world famous and highly respected historian, illuminates why this matter of labeling is so fraught with controversy. He was asked: "The British press reported in 1997 that your views on the killing of one million Armenians by the Turks in 1915 did not amount to genocide.... My question is, sir, have your views changed on this?" He responded:

in this particular case, the point that was being made was that the massacre of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire was the same as what happened to Jews in Nazi Germany and that is a downright falsehood. What happened to the Armenians was the result of a massive Armenian armed rebellion against the Turks, which began even before war broke out, and continued on a larger scale. Great numbers of Armenians, including members of the armed forces, deserted, crossed the frontier and joined the Russian forces invading Turkey. Armenian rebels actually seized the city of Van and held it for a while intending to hand it over to the invaders. There was guerrilla warfare all over Anatolia. And it is what we nowadays call the National Movement of Armenians against Turkey. The Turks certainly resorted to very ferocious methods in repelling it. There is clear evidence of a decision by the Turkish government to deport the Armenian population from the sensitive areas. Which meant naturally the whole of Anatolia. Not including the Arab provinces, which were then still part of the Ottoman Empire. There is no evidence of a decision to massacre. On the contrary, there is considerable evidence of attempts to prevent it, which were not very successful. Yes there were tremendous massacres, the numbers are very uncertain but a million may well be likely. The massacres were carried out by irregulars, by local villagers responding to what had been done to them and in a number of other ways. But to make this a parallel with the holocaust in Germany, you would have to assume the Jews of Germany had been engaged in an armed rebellion against the German state, collaborating with the allies against Germany. That in the deportation order the cities of Hamburg and Berlin were exempted, persons in the employment of state were exempted.... This seems to me a rather absurd parallel.²

Professor Lewis's cogent description of what happened during the tragic years of World War I is equally espoused by many other historians

who also reject the contention of the existence of persuasive evidence of genocide in the Armenian case. Whether the fate of the Ottoman Armenians meets the definition of the crime of genocide as provided by the UN Genocide Convention remains an authentic historical controversy.

THE DECISION OF THE EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

This view is effectively supported by the decision of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) on December 17, 2013, in the Perincek v. Switzerland case, ruling that the criminal conviction of Perinçek was unjustified. He had been tried for publicly denying that atrocities perpetrated against Armenians in 1915 and later constituted genocide. The ECHR held that the Swiss courts' decision violated article 10 (freedom of expression) of the European Convention on Human Rights. According to the ECHR, the essential ground for Perinçek's conviction by the Swiss courts was the apparent "existence of a general consensus," especially in the academic community, concerning the legal characterization of the events in question as genocide. The ECHR refuted this view for three reasons.³ First, it pointed out that it would be very difficult to identify a general consensus, as differing views existed even among the Swiss political organs themselves. Indeed the Swiss Federal Court itself had acknowledged the lack of unanimity in the community as a whole concerning the legal qualification in question. Furthermore, only about 20 states out of the 190 worldwide had officially recognized the Armenian genocide. Such recognition had not always been extended by the governments of those states but by the parliaments, as was the case in Switzerland.

Second, the ECHR rightly recalled that "genocide" is a precisely defined legal concept. According to the case law of the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, "genocide" requires that the acts in question must have been perpetrated with the specific intent to destroy not only certain members of the group but all or part of the group itself (*dolus specialis*). As a result the court noted that genocide is a very narrow, difficult-to-prove legal concept. It was not convinced that the "general consensus" on the existence of the Armenian genocide to which the Courts of Switzerland referred in convicting Perinçek could relate to such very specific points of law.⁴

Third, the ECHR expressed its doubts as to whether a general consensus could exist on events such as those at issue, given that historical research was by definition open to discussion and debate, without

necessarily giving rise to final conclusions or to the assertion of objective and absolute truths. In this connection the ECHR, underlining that Armenian claims cannot be compared to the Holocaust, clearly distinguished the present case from those concerning the denial of the crimes of the Holocaust committed by the Nazi regime. Those crimes have a clear legal basis established and proven by an international court.

Thus the ECHR refuted the Swiss courts' assertion that Armenian genocide is the object of a "general historical and scientific consensus" whose existence had to be considered established as a matter of fact and could not be challenged in court, even though the issue had not been adjudicated by a competent judicial authority. The ECHR also set aside any contention of legal equivalence of the "Armenian genocide" to the Holocaust, because the international proceedings that followed the Holocaust had a clear legal basis. The Holocaust was unambiguously established as fact and qualified as a crime by the Nuremberg International Tribunal, whereas no such valid judicial finding had so far been made in respect to the Armenian situation.⁵

THE MOSCOW, KARS, AND LAUSANNE TREATIES AND THE ARMENIAN QUESTION

In the context of this chapter three treaties (Moscow, Kars and Lausanne), which have nullified both Armenian ambitions for the establishment of an independent state in eastern Anatolia and Armenian accusations of crimes and offenses committed during the war years, are illuminating. On March 16, 1921, Turkey signed the Moscow Treaty with the Soviet Union, which definitively drew the boundaries between Turkey and the Soviet Union. In line with the provisions of this treaty on October 13, 1921, Turkey signed the Kars Treaty with the Soviet Union and with the three Soviet republics of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia, which confirmed Turkey's new boundaries with all these states. Both treaties also prescribed that the Sèvres Treaty signed upon the defeat of the Ottoman Empire, which foresaw the setting up of an Armenian state in eastern Anatolia whose borders would be determined by Woodrow Wilson, was null and void once and for all.

The Kars Treaty provided in article 15 that "[e]ach of the Contracting Parties agrees to promulgate immediately after the signature of the present Treaty a complete amnesty to citizens of the other party for crimes and offenses committed during the course of the war on the Caucasian front." It is clear from this provision that Armenians were under the

obligation to refrain from accusing the Turkish citizens of any criminal acts or offenses perpetrated during the period 1915 to 1922, as all the conflicts between Turkey and Armenia as well as the other Caucasian republics were considered settled.⁶

During the Lausanne Conference, Allied governments ostentatiously revived the Armenian Question and persisted in their initiative for the establishment of an Armenian national home on Turkish territory. They were met with a categorical refusal from the Turkish representatives. The Lausanne Treaty signed by Turkey and the Allies on July 24, 1923, to supersede the Treaty of Sèvres recognized the existing borders of the Turkish Republic and its status as an independent and sovereign state, excluding all mention of Armenia or Armenians.⁷

THE NONRETROACTIVITY OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENOCIDE CONVENTION

According to the principle of legality crystallized by the maxims *nullum crimen sine lege* (no crime without law) and *nulla poena sine lege* (no punishment without law), no accusation can validly be leveled against the members of the government of the Ottoman Empire or the Ottoman state on the basis of the Genocide Convention. International law, as provided by article 28 of the Vienna Convention of the Law of Treaties, prohibits the retroactive application of treaties unless a different intention appears in the treaty or is otherwise established.

The UN Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, which entered into force on January 12, 1951, contains no provisions prescribing its retroactive application. Furthermore, the convention's *traveaux préparatoires* support the view that the negotiators' intention was to accept a prospective not a retrospective obligation on behalf of the states that they represented. Consequently the Genocide Convention does not give rise to individual criminal or state responsibility for events that occurred in 1915 in eastern Anatolia.

What would be the conclusion of a legal analysis if the Genocide Convention was applied to the events of 1915? Notwithstanding the impermissibility of such an approach, truth and simple fairness may be served by an effort to determine whether or not the events of 1915 meet the definition of the crime of genocide as provided by the United Nations Genocide Convention. This chapter analyzes what the conclusions of a legal analysis would be if the Genocide Convention was retroactively applied to the events of 1915.

For such an analysis we have to establish the essential legal ingredients necessary for incriminating a person or persons for the crime of genocide. It should be noted at the outset, however, that the principle of individual criminal responsibility has been modified by a judgment of the International Court of Justice: states now can also be held responsible and prosecuted for failing to act to prevent genocide and for acts of genocide attributable to them.

Establishing the legal ingredients of genocide requires a review of the constituent elements of the crime of genocide in light of the United Nations Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide as well as the jurisprudence that evolved from the application of the convention by the ad hoc international criminal courts. A rich body of jurisprudence grew from the decisions of the International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia (ICTY) and International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR).

We have to examine the 2007 landmark judgment of the International Court of Justice. Although it dealt primarily with the issue of state responsibility, it also addressed perspectives on genocide law that had a deep impact on the jurisprudence of the two ad hoc international tribunals.

This analysis seeks to establish whether the acts of the Ottoman government or its members can be validly characterized as genocide in light of the provisions of the Genocide Convention interpreted in accord with the established precedents and jurisprudence.

THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF THE CRIME

The essential elements required to incriminate a person of the crime of genocide are laid down in article II, which is the key provision of the Genocide Convention:

In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

- (a) Killing members of the group;
- (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;

- (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group. 10

This definition has three main elements. The first is the list of five prohibited acts, the commission of which constitutes the objective/material element of the crime (the *actus reus* of genocide).

The second element is a list of protected groups. Article II names four entities that are protected under the convention: national, ethnic, racial, and religious groups. For genocide to occur under the convention the actions must be aimed at such a group. It is of critical importance to note here that the list of groups is exhaustive: for instance, political and cultural groups are not under the protection of the convention.

The third element is subjective/mental: the commission of the enumerated acts with "the intent to destroy in whole or in part a national, ethnical, racial and religious group, as such" (the *mens rea* of genocide).

The Expression "As Such"

Certain clarifications are necessary. In this context the expression "as such" is of great significance, because it qualifies the intent of the perpetrator. The perpetrator of genocide must have the purpose of destroying the group: the "victim is chosen not because of his individual identity, but rather on account of his membership in a national, ethnical, racial or religious group. The victim of the act is therefore a member of a group, chosen 'as such,' which, hence, means that the victim of the crime of genocide is the group itself and not only the individual." In other words, victimization of human beings is committed with an intent that reflects a culpable state of mind imbued with the purpose of destroying the group to which the victimized human beings belong. It is this characteristic of the intent that distinguishes genocide from other international crimes that fall into the category of "crimes against humanity."

Special Intent: Aggravated Criminal Intention

"Genocidal intent" is usually described as "specific intent" or "special intent," which corresponds to the *dolus specialis* of continental legal systems. William Schabas, a well-known authority on international criminal law, notes: "The degree of intent required by Article II of the Genocide Convention is usually described as 'specific intent' or 'special intent." The concept of "specific intent" (*dolus specialis*) in the context of the

crime of genocide requires an aggravated criminal intention in addition to the criminal intent accompanying the underlying crime.

The judgments of the ad hoc international criminal tribunals ICTY and ICTR have contributed to the elucidation of *dolus specialis*. As a matter of fact ICTY in that respect stated:

The special intent which characterizes genocide supposes that the alleged perpetrator of the crime selects his victims because they are part of a group which he is seeking to destroy. Where the goal of the perpetrator or perpetrators of the crime is to destroy all or part of a group, it is the membership of the individual in a particular group rather than the identity of the individual that is the decisive criterion in determining the immediate victims of the crime of genocide.¹³

The Term "in Whole or in Part"

The phrase "in whole or in part" also necessitates clarification. The drafting history of the convention indicates that the rationale for the expression "in part" was simply that genocide does not require an intent to destroy the entire group: intent to destroy a group only in part also would be sufficient. But the drafters did not discuss what should be the quantitative and qualitative significance of the part selected for destruction.

In that respect the ICTY underlined that the individuals selected for destruction must be important to the group as whole, such as the group's leaders or all of its military-aged men. According to the court's ruling, the intent may "consist of the desired destruction of a more limited number of persons selected for the impact that their disappearance would have upon the survival of the group as such." 14

The International Court of Justice authoritatively interpreted "in part" as a "substantial part" in its ruling on the Bosnian application against Serbia by describing the substantiality criterion as "critical":

In the first place, the intent must be to destroy at least a substantial part of a particular group. That is demanded by the very nature of the crime of genocide: since the object and purpose of the Convention as a whole is to prevent the intentional destruction of the groups, the part targeted must be significant enough to have an impact on the group as a whole. That requirement of substantiality is supported by consistent rulings of ICTY and the

International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) and by the commentary of the ILC [International Law Commission] to its Articles in the Draft Code of Crimes against Peace and Security of Mankind.¹⁵

The Existence of a Genocidal Policy or Plan

One of the most important issues in the law of genocide is whether a genocidal policy or plan is an element of genocide. The ICTY Appeals Chamber ruled in the *Jelisic* case that "the existence of a plan or policy is not a legal ingredient of a crime." It supported the view that the existence of a plan or policy to destroy a group does not need to be proven in order to incriminate a perpetrator of the crime of genocide. The Appeals Chamber added, however, that "in the context of proving specific intent, the existence of a plan or policy may become an important factor in most cases." ¹⁶ In a sense the chamber's ruling does not discount the view that genocide can be committed by a lone perpetrator.

This view is strongly opposed by many scholars, who think that the scope and organization of genocide requires "the acts of individual offenders within a collective enterprise." William Schabas argues that "it is nearly impossible to imagine genocide that is not planned and organized either by the state itself or a state-like entity or by some clique associated with it." ¹⁸

According to Schabas, "Because of the scope of genocide, it seems implausible that it can be committed by an individual acting alone. This is another way of saying that for genocide to take place there must be a plan, even though there is nothing in the Convention that explicitly requires this." To prove his point Schabas mentions the inconsistencies at the *Jelisic* trial: although the trial chamber stated that no plan was required, it equally said that "it will be very difficult in practice to provide proof of the genocidal intent of an individual if the crimes committed are not widespread and if the crime charged is not backed by an organization or a system." ²⁰

The Use of Inference to Prove Specific Intent

At the ICTY and ICTR trials the difficulty in establishing the specific intent necessary for a conviction for genocide has been brought up quite frequently. If the accused confessed or made a public speech or some statements of a genocidal nature prior to the perpetration of the crime the specific intent to destroy a group can be explicitly demonstrated. Otherwise specific intent has to be inferred from the material evidence,

including evidence that demonstrates a consistent pattern of conduct by the accused. It is important to note in this context that the level of proof that is sought by the courts in this process is the standard of proof beyond a reasonable doubt.

The relevant facts and circumstances by which ICTR and ICTY held that specific intent can be inferred include "physical targeting of the group or their property"; "the fact of deliberately and systematically targeting victims on account of their membership of a particular group, while excluding the members of other groups"; "the use of derogatory language toward members of the targeted group"; "the weapons employed and the extent of bodily injury"; "the methodical way of planning"; "the systematic manner of killing"; "the repetition of destructive and discriminatory acts"; "the general political doctrine which gave rise to the constituent acts of genocide"; "the perpetration of acts which violate, or which the perpetrators themselves consider to violate, the very foundation of the group"; "the scale of atrocities committed"; and "the number of victims from the group."²¹

THE ICJ JUDGMENT ON BOSNIA'S GENOCIDE CASE AGAINST SERBIA

Important concepts emanated from the judgment of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), delivered on February 26, 2007, in the case brought by Bosnia and Herzegovina against Serbia and Montenegro, in which Bosnia charged that Serbia had committed acts of genocide against Bosnian Muslims. This judgment is regarded by a significant majority of scholars as having a definitive effect, "because it was the first time in history that an international interstate tribunal, and one endowed with the authority of the ICJ, had to establish the responsibility of a state for one of the most serious crimes of concern for the international community."22 This decision not only addressed and clarified the nature of state responsibility regarding genocide for the first time but also made an important contribution on international criminal law. Until this ruling by the ICI the international practice in dealing with the crime of genocide was based on the individuality of the crime. According to this concept, only individuals could be held responsible for genocide crimes, whereas the state merely had the obligation to punish those who committed the crimes. This practice was based on the 1946 judgment of the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal, which espoused the principle that "crimes against international law are committed by men, not by abstract

entities."²³ Article IV of the 1948 United Nations Genocide Convention, also reflecting this concept, prescribes that "[p]ersons committing genocide...shall be punished whether they are constitutionally responsible rulers, public officials or private individuals." This article does not cover legal persons or states.

The ICJ, by reviewing the preparatory work of the Genocide Convention and interpreting the first and ninth articles, has made a ruling. Although as a matter of principle international law does not recognize the criminal responsibility of the state, and the Genocide Convention does not provide a vehicle for the imposition of such criminal responsibility, states are obliged not to commit genocide and consequently are obliged to prevent genocide and punish its perpetrators. ²⁴ The court also observed that states are responsible for acts of genocide committed by organs or groups whose acts are attributable to them.

It should be noted that the ICJ's judgment on a dispute over a violation of the Genocide Convention is the first since the convention was adopted in 1948. It was also the first time that a state was held responsible for violating the convention on the grounds that it failed to take the necessary steps to prevent genocide.

The Criterion of Due Diligence

Certain aspects of the ICJ's judgment are important for our analysis. First, the ICJ's establishment of the criterion of due diligence to appraise the responsibility of the state under its obligation to prevent genocide is a significant step. According to this criterion, a state cannot be under the obligation to succeed in preventing the commission of genocide irrespective of the circumstances. But a state incurs responsibility if it manifestly fails to take the measures that were within its means and that might contribute to preventing genocide. The salient observation of the court in that respect is as follows:

it is clear that the obligation in question is one of conduct and not one of result, in the sense that a State cannot be under the obligation to succeed, whatever the circumstances, in preventing the commission of genocide; the obligations of State parties is rather to employ all means available to them, so as to prevent genocide so far as possible. A State does not incur responsibility simply because the desired result is not achieved; responsibility is however incurred if the State manifestly failed to take all the measures to prevent genocide which were within its power, and which might

have contributed to preventing genocide. In this area the notion of "due diligence," which calls for an assessment *in concreto*, is of critical importance. Various parameters operate when assessing whether a State has duly discharged the obligation concerned. The first, which varies greatly from one state to another, is clearly the capacity to influence effectively the action of persons likely to commit, or already committing, genocide. This capacity itself depends, among other things, on the geographical distance of the State concerned from the scene of events, and on the strength of political links, as well as links of all other kinds, between the authorities of that State and the main actor of the events.²⁵

Clearly the ICJ's view is that a state that acts responsibly to prevent actions and events that threaten to turn into a genocide by earnestly taking all measures materially and legally within its power to prevent the perpetration of genocide cannot be held responsible even if it does not succeed in stopping the dreadful event despite its best efforts.

The corollary of this conclusion is that for the state to be incriminated in genocide it is necessary to prove that by neglect the state manifestly failed in its duty to undertake all timely measures reasonably available to it. In this context the ICJ also considered the capacity of a state to influence persons committing the acts to be crucial. The court also specified that the obligation to prevent such acts arises "at the instant that the state learns of, or should normally have learned of, the existence of a serious risk that genocide will be committed." ²⁶

The Standard of Fully Conclusive Evidence

In rejecting the ICTY standard of "beyond reasonable doubt," the ICJ decided to follow the standard of "fully conclusive evidence" for proving specific intent:

The Court has long recognized that claims against a State involving charges of exceptional gravity must be proved by evidence that is fully conclusive [cf. Corfu Channel (*United Kingdom v. Albania*), Judgement, ICJ Reports 1949, 17]. The Court requires that it be fully convinced that allegations made in the proceedings, that the crime of genocide or other acts enumerated in Article III have been committed, have been clearly established. The same standard applies to the proof of attribution for such acts.²⁷

The court also found: "In respect to the Applicant's claim that the Respondent has breached its undertakings to prevent genocide and to punish and extradite persons charged with genocide, the Court requires proof at a high level of certainty appropriate to the seriousness of the allegation." ²⁸

The import of this particular ruling from the point of view of inferential evidence cannot be overstated. The ICJ openly rejected the ICTY's evolved jurisprudence based on inference for proving genocidal intent in the absence of incontrovertible proof to incriminate the accused. The ICJ would not rely on inference to prove specific intent; it ruled that only conclusive or "smoking gun" evidence is requisite for indictments of genocide.

Specific Intent in Each Particular Case

The ICJ rejected the approach adopted by the ICTY and ICTR that the genocidal intent could be inferred from cumulative analysis of circumstantial evidence endorsed by a pattern of similar conduct directed against the targeted group. The ICJ stated that specific intent should be demonstrated for each particular case:

Turning now to the Applicant's contention that the very pattern of the atrocities committed over many communities, over a lengthy period, focused on Bosnian Muslims and also Croats, demonstrates the necessary intent, the Court cannot agree with such a broad proposition. The *dolus specialis*, the specific intent to destroy the group in whole or in part, has to be convincingly shown by reference to particular circumstances, unless a general plan to that end can be convincingly demonstrated to exist; and for a pattern of conduct to be accepted as evidence of its existence, it would have to be such that it could only point to the existence of such intent.²⁹

The ICJ observed that the acts committed at Srebrenica were committed with the specific intent to destroy a part of the Bosnian Muslims and reiterated that these were acts of genocide, still imbued with an inexorable (unyielding) attitude on specific intent. But it did not reach the same verdict for the other bloodcurdling murders and atrocities committed all over Bosnia during the period from 1992 to 1995.

Indeed the ICJ recognized that it had been established by fully conclusive evidence that the Bosnians were victims of systemic massive killings and mistreatment, beatings, rapes, and torture during the conflict and in the detention camps; although these atrocities may amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity, they cannot be characterized as genocide because it had not been conclusively established that they were committed with specific intent (*dolus specialis*) to destroy the Bosnians in whole or in part.

The Criterion of "Effective Control"

The ICJ adopted an even higher standard when deciding on the question of attribution of the Srebrenica genocide to the Former Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY). With regard to the finding that Serbia did not commit genocide, the ICJ stated that the acts of those involved could not be attributed to the FRY, because they were not acting as its organs or agents or under its command and control. Departing from the criterion of "overall control" applied by the ICTY's Appeals Chamber in the Tadic case (involving camps run by the Republika Srpska in Bosnia and Herzegovina), the ICJ adopted the "effective control" criterion established by its judgment in Military and Paramilitary Activities in and against Nicaragua (Nicaragua v. United States of America). This is the only criterion that can be used in establishing state responsibility. According to the Appeals Chamber, the appropriate criterion for imputing the acts committed by Bosnian Serbs to the FRY was the "overall control" exercised over the Bosnian Serbs by the FRY, without any need to prove that each operation was carried out on the FRY's instructions or under its effective control.

But the ICJ said: "Genocide will be considered as attributable to a state if and to the extent that the physical acts constitutive of genocide that have been committed by organs or persons other than the State's own agents were carried out, wholly or in part, on the instructions or directions of the state, or under its effective control. This is the state of customary international law, as reflected in the ILC articles on state responsibility." ³⁰

Thus the ICJ refused to find the FRY culpable for the actions of Bosnian Serb militias or VRS (Army of the Republika Srpska), despite the existence of overwhelming evidence that the Slobodan Milošević regime trained, armed, and had powerful influence over the VRS. In finding that these bonds were not sufficient to establish the FRY's responsibility for and complicity in the genocide perpetrated in Srebrenica the ICJ imposed the "effective control" criterion. This placed a considerable burden on Bosnia to prove that the VRS had committed genocide in Srebrenica

under the explicit instructions of the FRY or that Srebrenica operations were carried out under the effective control of the FRY. These demands of the ICJ could only be satisfied if Bosnia was able to produce expressed and written evidence, such as written instructions given by the General Staff of the FRY to the main staff of the VRS or documents proving the factual involvement and direction of the FRY organs in the Srebrenica operations.³¹

The Conditions under Which the Government and Its Members Incur Responsibility

From the foregoing it is clear that establishment of guilt for the crime of genocide requires proof of the existence of the two legal ingredients of the crime.

The first is the objective/material element of the offense, constituted by one or several acts enumerated in article II of the Genocide Convention. The material element is in reality twofold: the execution of the prohibited acts and the targeted group, which must be a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group. The material element of the crime is satisfied when it is proven that the prohibited conduct was carried out by the perpetrator against one of these groups or members of such a group.

The second is the subjective/mental element (*mens rea*) of the offense, consisting of the aggravated criminal intention or specific intent (*dolus specialis*) to destroy the targeted group as such in whole or in part.

In light of the views expressed in the ICJ judgment on the Bosnian genocide case the application of these ingredients for establishing guilt of genocide on the part of a government or its members must take the following elements into consideration.

First, the government or its members incur responsibility if they manifestly failed to take all the measures within their power in a timely manner to prevent genocide. If the government and its members acted according to the criteria of due diligence established by the ICJ, however, they would not incur responsibility if these efforts failed.

Second, the ICJ ruling heightened the threshold of the specific intent. Proof of the specific intent of the alleged perpetrator requires fully conclusive evidence. Inference cannot be relied on to prove intent. Only conclusive or "smoking gun" evidence is valid to prove specific intent. Either a program or plan regarding the execution of genocide or conclusive evidence indicating the existence of such a plan must exist.

Third, genocidal intent cannot be inferred from the cumulative evidence endorsed by a pattern of similar conduct directed against the

targeted group. The specific intent to destroy the group in whole or in part has to be convincingly shown by reference to particular circumstance, unless a general plan to that end can be convincingly demonstrated to exist.

Fourth, the attribution of culpability to the state because of the genocidal actions committed by organs or persons other than the state's own agents necessitates expressed written evidence, such as written instructions to these organs or persons or factual involvement of the state or its organs and direction of the genocidal actions in question.

WHY THE 1915 EVENTS CANNOT BE CONSIDERED A GENOCIDE

In light of the foregoing information and arguments, if the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide were to apply, albeit retroactively, to the 1915 events, they nonetheless cannot be regarded as genocide. The Ottoman government and its members can neither validly nor reasonably be accused of committing genocide for the following reasons.

The Objective or Material Element

In order to establish guilt for genocide on the part of the Ottoman government or its members the objective/material element that is one of the two constituent elements of crime must exist. The existence and implementation of a plan or program to perpetrate the five criminal acts stated in article II of the Convention (killing, causing serious bodily or mental harm, deliberately inflicting conditions of life calculated to bring about a group's physical destruction, preventing births, and forcibly transferring children to another group) must be proven. Credible evidence of the issuance of orders and instructions to commit or encourage these crimes against Armenians by the Ottoman government or its members, of their complicity in these crimes, or of their attempt to commit these crimes is necessary. The existence of such a plan, the issuance of such orders and instructions, and the encouragement and complicity of the Ottoman government and its members have never been proven. Moreover, even if certain of the crimes specified in article II were committed during the relocation process, all these took place beyond the will, intention, and authority of the Ottoman government.

No available documents or other sources of evidence attribute these crimes to the government or its members. To the contrary, extensive credible evidence indicates that the government and its members took all the necessary measures with utmost care and diligence for the prevention of these acts. When the laws enacted, orders issued, and precautionary measures taken for this purpose were violated in some remote areas, the government promptly used all available means to try to prevent such violations and also promptly punished the criminals. Various military tribunals set up in different areas tried and sentenced the civilians, government officials, and military officers who were found guilty of violations of the relevant laws and instructions, with very severe penalties, including death sentences.³² Under these circumstances it is not possible to say that the objective/material element of the crime has been validly established.

The Existence of Only "Hearsay Evidence" to Support Armenian Claims

Neither the Ottoman administration nor the Ottoman officers planned or intended to massacre the country's Armenian citizens or to annihilate them. No declarations, orders, or documents prove that such a plan or intent existed. The research and investigations carried out for the last hundred years have revealed no such evidence in the Ottoman or foreign archives. Edward J. Erickson, a well-known military historian who is familiar with the Ottoman archives, remarked in that respect:

Why isn't there a "smoking gun?" There are no authentic documents anywhere today that establish either an order to exterminate the Armenians or an order to relocate them for ideological or political reasons. In a nutshell, there isn't a paper trail documenting these things and we should ask why. The Ottomans were obsessive about paper and bureaucratic filing. In fact, almost nothing happened in the highly centralized and "top-down" Ottoman bureaucracy without written and stamped official directives and orders. The British, when occupying Constantinople for over four years, searched vigorously for evidence of state-sponsored war crimes and found none. It is simply inconceivable that 100 percent of such directives and orders, distributed empire-wide to provincial governors over the course of the global war, would not have survived.³³

Guenter Lewy also underlined that "there is only hearsay evidence" about the forcible elimination of the Armenians by the Turks:

No authentic documentary evidence exists to prove the culpability of the central government of Turkey for massacres of 1915–16.

It is also significant that not one of many thousands of officials who would have been involved in so far-reaching a scheme as a premeditated plan to destroy the Armenians has ever come forth to reveal the plot. The order for the Final Solution of the Jewish Question also is not embodied in a written record, but the major elements of the decision-making process leading up to the annihilation of Jews can be reconstructed from the events, court testimony that has been subject to cross-examination, and a rich store of authentic documents. Barring the unlikely testimony of some new sensational documents in the Turkish archives, it is safe to say that no such evidence exists for the events of 1915–16.

In the absence of this kind of proof, the Armenian side has relied upon materials of highly questionable authenticity, such as Andonian's *Memoirs of Naim Bey* or copies of alleged documents used by the Turkish military tribunals after the end of the war. Armenians have also invoked the exterminatory consequences of the deportations; but this argument rests on a logical fallacy and ignores the huge loss of life among Turkish civilians, soldiers, and prisoners-of-war due to sheer impotence, neglect, starvation, and disease. All of these groups also experienced a huge death toll that surely cannot be explained in terms of a Young Turk plan of annihilation.³⁴

In this context Erickson pointedly asked "why is it that the Turkish archives are open to scholars today and those of Armenia, the ARF [Armenian Revolutionary Federation] in Waltham, Massachusetts, and the Armenian Patriarch in Jerusalem, closed?" ³⁵

Unfortunately, both the Armenian government and the Armenian diaspora, disregarding the public perception that only those who fear the truth would limit the scope of research, invariably refuse calls for the examination of all records regarding the events of 1915.

The archives of the Armenian revolutionary committees and guerrilla armies that were active in the Ottoman Empire during and after World War I are kept at the repositories of the Dashnak Party and the First Republic of Armenia in the Hairenic Association building in Watertown, Massachusetts. In contrast to the open Ottoman archives these holdings and the archives of the Armenian patriarchate in Jerusalem and the catholicosate (seat of the supreme religious leader of the Armenian people) in Etchmiadzin remain closed to non-Armenian researchers. Dashnak Party archives are also not available to those Armenians who do not

subscribe to the maximalist claims of the Armenian diaspora's political leaders. Not only do these institutions close their archives to non-Armenian and even some Armenian scholars, but they do not even allow the public to access catalogs detailing their holdings.³⁶

Relocation as a Military Solution to a Military Problem

According to Erickson, "The Armenian insurrection was a genuine security imperative requiring an immediate solution, and it was an existential threat to the survival of the empire's armies." He explains the compelling requirements that forced the Ottoman government to choose a strategy based on relocation as follows:

This was largely a result of the machinations of the allied powers, which encouraged and supported the eastern Anatolian Armenian revolutionary committees to commit acts of terrorism and minor insurrections in early 1915. These small and localized, but widespread acts of Armenian violence appeared to metastasize during a major Armenian insurrection at Van in April 1915, which drove the Ottoman government into the belief that the Armenian insurrection was an imminent and existential threat to the Ottoman national security. With almost the entire Ottoman army deployed on the active fronts, the Ottomans did not have the force structure available to deal with the Armenian committees as they had done over the previous 30 years in other circumstances and places. In the late spring of 1915, the Ottomans turned to a Western-style policy of regional population relocation designed to separate the insurgents from their base of popular support. The resulting counterinsurgency campaign was, effectively, a resource driven strategy of poverty, within which was nested a monumental failure by the state to protect and sustain the deportees.³⁷

Erickson adds:

As to the question of whether the relocation was necessary for reasons of Ottoman national security in World War I. From the perspective of what the Ottoman government believed was happening—the answer is yes. In fact there was a direct threat by the insurgent Armenian revolutionary committees to the lines of communications upon which the logistics of the Ottoman armies on three fronts depended. The consequences of failing to supply

its armies adequately in contact with the Russians in particular, must have led to the military defeat of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman high command simply could not take that chance. Pressed by the compelling requirements of a world war to implement an immediate counterinsurgency policy and operational solution, in the absence of traditionally available military and paramilitary forces, the Ottoman government chose a strategy based on relocation—itself a highly effective practice pioneered by the Great Powers. The relocation of the Armenian population and the associated destruction of the Armenian revolutionary committees ended what the Ottoman government believed was an existential threat to the Ottoman state, and the empire survived to fight on until late 1918.³⁸

To visualize the existential threat that the Armenian insurrection and rebellion posed to the national security of the Ottoman state we must consider that the Ottomans were fighting the Allied powers on three fronts when the relocation of Armenians was initiated: the Russians on the Caucasian frontier, the British in Mesopotamia and Palestine, and the British and French at Gallipoli. At that time the condition of the Ottoman 3rd Army, which was responsible for the defense of eastern Anatolia, where the Armenian insurgency and revolution broke out, was disastrous. In late December 1914 in the Sarıkamış campaign the Russian forces had inflicted a catastrophic defeat on the 3rd Army. Due to the enormous casualties resulting from the Sarıkamış war and the following battles with the Russian army the number of soldiers in the 3rd Army decreased from 168,608 (the number that existed on September 26, 1914) to 59,000. As of May 1915 the number of soldiers in infantry divisions with an official strength set at 9,000 had declined to 2,000.³⁹ Thus the Ottoman strategic position in eastern Anatolia was gravely weakened. This situation was worsened by the Armenian uprising in Van, followed by the occupation of the city by the Russian army on May 14, 1915. On May 21 Tsar Nicholas II sent a telegram to the Armenian revolutionary committee of Van, thanking it "for its services to Russia." The Armenian newspaper Goshnak, published in the United States, proudly reported on May 24 that "only 1,600 Turks remain in Van," the rest having been slaughtered.40

The Van uprising acted as a catalyst for the Armenian rebellion, transforming it to a full-fledged insurrection. While the Russian army advanced along a wide front inside Anatolia, Armenian guerrillas began to

undermine Ottoman defenses by attacking the 3rd Army from the rear. The Armenian bands spreading death and destruction by attacking Turkish and Muslim villages all over the region simultaneously interdicted the vulnerable Ottoman lines of communications by cutting telegraph wires, cutting and blocking roads, attacking logistic convoys, and disrupting the flow of war materiel and supplies.⁴¹

As the war in Gallipoli was sucking up all the resources and manpower of the country, the Ottoman High Command failed to make up for the colossal losses of the 3rd Army, which was facing a Russian army of 200,000 men. To make things worse, the 3rd Army's supplies and armament stocks had diminished to such a critical point that any kind of short-term interruption in the logistical supply chain would create a deadly peril for the troops.

The location of the Armenian population and the areas of insurgency are of critical importance in accurately understanding the nature of the existential threat faced by the Ottoman Armies in eastern Anatolia:

The lines of communications supporting those Ottoman fronts ran directly through the rear areas of the Ottoman Armies in eastern Anatolia that were heavily populated by Armenian communities and, by extension, by the heavily armed Armenian revolutionary committees. Importantly, none of the Ottoman Armies on the fronts in Caucasia, Mesopotamia and Palestine were self-sufficient in food, fodder, ammunition, or medical supplies and all were dependent on the roads and railroads leading West to Constantinople and Thrace for those supplies. Moreover, none of these forces had much in the way of prepositioned supplies available and all required the continuous flow of material. 42

Most of the 3rd Army supplies were carried along two corridors. The northern corridor followed the Sivas-Erzincan-Erzurum route, while the southern corridor went along the Diyarbakır-Bitlis-Van route. Some of the Ottoman front line units were at a distance of about 550 miles from railheads, so war materiel and other supplies had to be carried by animal-drawn transport on mostly dirt roads along very long stretches exposed to the attacks of Armenian insurgents. The convoys were extremely vulnerable, as they had very limited numbers of small arms and guards.

During this period Armenian guerrillas conducting hostile operations in the area had the capacity to sever the northern logistic route at any time. Moreover, the southern supply route also was in danger due to armed Armenian insurgency. The depleted 3rd Army could not afford the diversion of any military units from the front line for the purpose of securing and defending these vital lines of supply. This situation made the relocation an existential necessity for the Ottoman Empire.

Threats of the Armenian insurrection had also reached dangerous levels in Cilicia (Çukurova: the south-eastern coastal region of Anatolia), endangering the lines of communication of the Ottoman 4th Army along the Adana-İskenderun (Alexandretta)–Dörtyol-Halep route. (The supplies of the 6th Army in Mesopotamia were also transported along this route.) In this region Armenian bands were in direct contact with the British and French fleets, which had bombarded the harbor of İskenderun as well as railways and bridges at other coastal points. Armenian insurgents had high hopes that the Allies would open a second front by landing troops at Iskenderun or Mersin. "Such a force, it was believed, could cut the Baghdad railway (running only 45 miles away from the coastline) and thus paralyze the Turkish forces in Mesopotamia and Palestine, whose supplies depended upon this railroad." An amphibious attack was a primary concern for the 4th Army's staff, which was aware of this situation from the information gathered from captured Armenian agents that the British had landed on the coast. 44

During the spring and summer of 1915 Armenians kept pressing the Allies for a landing on the shores of Cilicia.

The British staffs in Cairo were especially energized with the idea of conducting an amphibious landing near Dörtyol and Alexandretta [İskenderun] in conjunction with a large Armenian uprising in the Zeytun region, for the purpose of cutting the Ottoman railway lines.... On July 22, 1915, a delegation from the Armenian National Defense Committee approached Sir John Maxwell, British commander-in-chief in Egypt, to reinforce the offer of coordinated Armenian rebellions and to offer positive internal military assistance to the British. Boghos Nubar, a member of the delegation, claimed that the British could "rely on 25,000 Armenian insurgents in Cilicia and 15,000 from nearby provinces" to support an allied landing in the İskenderun area, which would sever Ottoman lines of communications leading to the Sinai front. Maxwell decided not to pursue the scheme largely because the ongoing Gallipoli campaign absorbed almost the entire British effort in the Mediterranean.45

To summarize, all-pervading armed Armenian guerrilla forces working in coordination with the Russians were attacking the rear area of the front line units as well as carrying out interdiction and destruction operations against the vital lines of supply of the 3rd Army, which was bereft of the required combat strength and supplies to deal effectively with the advance of the Russian army. Under these conditions the activity of the Armenian guerrillas constituted a primary threat to the survival of the 3rd Army. All the forces in Anatolia were stripped from the interior provinces to reinforce the armies fighting at the frontiers. Defeat of the 3rd Army would have meant that no Ottoman force was deployed between the advancing Russian army and Istanbul, the capital of the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, the Ottoman High Command, quite reasonably under the circumstances, was alarmed at the prospect of an imminent British-French amphibious invasion in the İskenderun-Dörtyol area. The resulting disruption of supply and communication lines would have paralyzed the 4th Army and weakened the defense posture of the 6th Army. For these reasons the Armenian rebellion constituted a security risk requiring an immediate answer and was "an existential threat to the survival of the empire's armies."46 The counterinsurgency strategy adopted by the Ottoman government to eliminate this problem was to separate the Armenian insurgents and guerrillas from their supply bases by relocating designated Armenian communities to locations that posed no threat. Once this was accomplished small Ottoman forces could easily deal with the insurgents in detail.⁴⁷ Thus relocation was an existential necessity for the Ottoman Empire. In this respect it would be right to consider the relocation decision "a military measure to deal with a military problem." 48

THE PROVISIONAL LAW ON RELOCATION AND SETTLEMENT

The Ottoman Council of Ministers' Provisional Law on Relocation and Settlement, dated May 27, 1915, stated: "The Army, Army Corps, and Divisional Commanders are authorized to transfer and relocate the populations of villages and towns, either individually or collectively, in response to military needs, or in response to any signs of treachery or betrayal." This law requiring certain Armenian local communities to relocate within the imperial territories, in addition to the aforementioned military necessities, resulted from the lethally belligerent acts of Armenians of these communities. These included joining the ranks of the invading Russian army; cooperating with Russia; providing support to the enemy

by setting up voluntary armed bands; sabotaging the Ottoman lines of defense and supply lines as the Ottomans were retreating before the advancing Russian army;⁵⁰ revolting in many cities; attacking and massacring Turkish and Muslim people; and organizing armed attacks on Turkish and Muslim villages.⁵¹

The Government's Efforts to Conduct the Relocation in a Safe and Orderly Manner

It should be underlined that the Ottoman government acted with a full sense of responsibility to conduct the relocation in a safe and orderly manner. Hundreds of formal archive documents such as codes, government decisions, decrees, regulations, and directives prove that the government acted with the utmost attention and care in order to preserve the safety of the lives and property of the relocated and to take all precautions to provide for their nourishment and health needs during the relocation process. To secure the lives and property of those who were relocated, the government carefully supervised the relocation process to the maximum practicable extent and supported it with resources to the full limit of its capability under the extremely adverse war conditions that prevailed at the time.

Government law enforcement resources were deployed to identify, try, and punish anyone (whether a member of the army, a public servant, or a civilian) for breaches of the laws and regulations enacted to protect the lives and property of the Armenians. Archival documents establish that the government investigated offenses and crimes such as the extortion of properties and assassination of Armenians during the relocation and sent instructions to the provinces in order to ensure that offenders were held to account and duly punished. When violations continued, more radical measures were taken: inquiry commissions were sent to the regions where they occurred. Those who were accused by the commissions were brought before the military courts. The court records show that 1,673 people were put on trial in the middle of 1916, of whom 67 were sentenced to death, 524 were imprisoned, and 68 were sentenced to hard labor, condemned to galleys, or exiled.⁵³

Armenian advocates claim that peaceful and passive Armenians were attacked by Turks without any provocation whatsoever. They assert that Armenians enlisted in the Russian army as an act of legitimate self-defense against the implementation of the relocation law. Those claims do not stand up to examination, particularly in light of the unambiguous context of the history of the preceding years and decades. Beginning in the last quarter of the nineteenth century Armenians in Anatolia

prepared for a wholesale rebellion and came to see the impending war as an extraordinary opportunity to realize their aim of founding an independent Armenian national state on Ottoman land with the support of Russia. Thousands of Ottoman Armenians trained in Russian military training camps before the war. When the Turkish-Russian War broke out, they enrolled in the Russian army in order to support Russian war power in Anatolia. Authenticated archive documents clearly establish that under the leadership of the Dashnak and Hunchak parties tens of thousands of Armenians were equipped with weapons and munitions, which were concealed in hidden depots in Anatolia. They set about to slaughter Turkish and Muslim people, actively assisted the Russian army, and cut the logistic and supply lines of the Turkish army.⁵⁴

Relocation as a Reaction to the Vital Threat Posed by the Armenian Rebellion

Historians and writers who assert that Armenians did not rebel but rather were forced to resist with guns once the relocation began do so without any benefit of supporting evidence. The great weight of evidence unambiguously indicates exactly the contrary. Thousands of documents in Ottoman, Russian, American, French, English, and German archives prove that Armenian rebellion and collaboration with the enemy began before the relocation and that with the outbreak of the war the Armenian rebels openly engaged on the Russian side against the Ottoman state. After the Ottomans entered World War I the first organized Armenianinitiated violence commenced on November 11, 1914, whereas the relocation law was enacted on May 27, 1915. In this context the declarations of Boghos Nubar Paşa (head of the Armenian National Delegation to the Paris Peace Conference) and Hovhannes Kachaznuni (the first prime minister of the Armenian Republic) show that the claim that Armenians took part on the Russian side only after the relocation is untrue.⁵⁵ They also show that the Ottoman Empire had an inarguable reason to transfer Armenian people to different regions outside of the Russian army's theater of operations.

The Claim That Relocation Was a Carefully Planned Scheme to Annihilate the Armenians

It is true that the Armenians suffered casualties during the clashes in Anatolia and relocation. But it is not possible to render a plausible claim, let alone prove, that this was the result of an intentional act of destruction previously planned by the Ottoman administration. To the contrary, the overwhelming preponderance of the evidence, and indeed the hard logic

of the dire situation of the Ottoman government's forces in the region, points to other reasons for the casualties of the relocation. The government's depleted resources were sadly inadequate to provide public order under the pressure of war conditions.

The resulting disorder and lack of troops in the relocation process to protect Armenians from armed marauders resulted in Armenian casualties. The government already was helpless to protect its own vital military logistic and supply lines to the 3rd and 4th Armies. Protection of Armenian relocation convoys with full complements of regular military units was hopelessly beyond its means. Facute shortages of vehicles, fuel, food, and medicine under hard wartime conditions, along with bad weather and epidemic diseases such as typhus, also took a heavy toll. These woeful conditions wrought terrible suffering on the Muslim population as well. A notable part of the Armenian casualties between 1914 and 1922 resulted from the hostile operations initiated and conducted by Armenian insurgents themselves, in internal Armenian disputes and internecine wars. Moreover, attacks by Armenians against other Ottoman populations provoked outrage and reprisals by survivors from traumatized and aggrieved local communities.

The Distinctions and Exemptions in the Execution of the Relocation

Different segments of the Ottoman Armenian people were subjected to very different treatments during relocation, which makes it implausible to assert that Armenians were targeted as a national, ethnic, racial, and religious group to be "destroyed in whole or in part." Indeed the relocation decision was not applied to all Armenians living in all the cities and provinces. Armenians from certain sects, those who had different positions and jobs, and those who needed assistance were exempted from relocation. Armenians living in Istanbul, the capital of the empire, and in large cities such as İzmir and Halep were excluded from the relocation policy. 61 Catholic and Protestant Armenians, those who were Ottoman army officers and served in the medical services, and those who worked in the Ottoman Bank and in some consulates were not subject to relocation, as long as they remained loyal to the Ottoman state. Moreover, the sick, disabled people, the elderly, orphaned children, and widows were not relocated. 62 Such persons were taken under protection in orphanages and villages, and their expenses were met with Migratory Funds by the state.

The Armenians who revolted against the Ottoman Empire did so to achieve independence by means of violent rebellion, executed by armed political organizations (Dashnaks, Hunchaks, and others). The leaders of the Armenian independence movement who fought in the ranks of the Russian army sought participation in the Paris Peace Conference as a belligerent power. As a justification for their demand they put forth official documents showing the dimensions of the roles that they had undertaken in the war against Ottomans and the "considerable sacrifices" that they incurred. Boghos Nubar Paşa openly claimed credit for Armenian war actions at the conference by holding that it was Armenian participation in the war effort that led to what was asserted to be "mistreatment" by the Ottoman authorities. ⁶³ But political groups, as we know, are not a "group" under the protection of the United Nations Genocide Convention.

The Need for Conclusive Evidence of Specific Intent

A legally valid accusation against the Ottoman government or its members of having committed genocide requires proven existence of the subjective/mental element. This is the second constituent element of the crime that must be proven. It is necessary to prove that the crime was committed with "special intent" (*dolus specialis*): that the Ottoman government or its members intended to destroy Armenians with a will and intent focused on their destruction in whole or in part—because they were Armenians—by means of the prohibited acts enumerated in article II.

The International Court of Justice in its judgment of February 26, 2007, on the Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia and Montenegro case ruled that special intent can only be established by fully "conclusive evidence" and refused circumstantial evidence to prove genocidal intent. To establish the special intent it is necessary to show that a plan existed, revealing that the Ottoman government was moved by the intent to destroy the Armenians in whole or in part because they were Armenians and that it used relocation as a method for achieving this aim. But such a plan or document does not exist. Armenian advocates, despite their efforts for the last hundred years, have not been able to produce a single document that proves the existence of such a plan. Therefore it is not possible to assert the legal validity of the Armenian claims.

The Absence of Racial Hatred in Turkish-Armenian Conflict

The aforementioned jurisprudence assumes that the existence of racial hatred and discriminatory and degrading treatment of the victims of the massacre in the culture of the country where the crime has been

committed is an element in proving genocide. In this context it is therefore necessary for the Armenian side to prove that the Ottoman state formulated and executed a discriminatory policy to the detriment of the Armenian people, emanating from hatred toward Armenians, and that Armenians were degraded and excluded from the society because of their nationality, religion, and ethnicity. But such racial hatred, degrading attitudes, and treatment against the Armenians cannot be discerned in Ottoman-Turkish culture.

In reality Turkish-Armenian relations present a most interesting and attractive picture from the broad historical perspective. Indeed many Turkish and foreign historians and writers maintain that it is hard to find another example in world history where two peoples who speak different languages and have different religions lived together intermingled in a peaceful atmosphere for such a long time. "The Presbyterian historian Joseph Grabill said quite correctly: 'The Turks leniently treated Armenians, who became the favorite non-Moslem minority in the Ottoman government."64 It should be emphasized that the Ottoman Empire showed no evidence of an anti-Armenian posture in any way equivalent to traditional anti-Semitic attitudes in Germany, which paved the way to the Holocaust. Exactly the opposite stance was the main pillar of the Ottoman Empire: the Armenians were known to the Turks as *millet-i* sadıka (the loyal community). İn 1914, for example, the Armenian leader Boghos Nubar Paşa was offered a place in the Ottoman cabinet as a minister. Referring to this, the British historian Norman Stone asks whether one could "imagine Hitler making Chaim Weizmann the same offer?" 65 Even as late as in February 1917, when Talat Paşa as the new grand vezir was about to form a new cabinet, the draft list that he prepared included several Armenians as ministers.66

CONCLUSION

Were the United Nations Genocide Convention to be retroactively applied to the Armenian genocide claim, the foregoing analysis leads us to conclude that the material and mental elements of the crime did not exist. The specific intent that is the key element of the crime of genocide requires fully conclusive proof that the members of a group were targeted for extinction solely because they were members of that group. Under this standard of proof the Armenian claim of genocide fails for two reasons. First, no direct or conclusive evidence has ever been produced to demonstrate that any official of the Ottoman government sought the

destruction of the Ottoman Armenians with a will and intent focused on their national, ethnical, racial, or religious identity. Second, the Armenian insurrection and collaboration with the invading Russian army posed an existential threat to the national security of the Ottoman state. Under these circumstances military imperatives, not the Armenians' ethnic or religious identity, dictated relocation away from strategically vital and acutely vulnerable geographic areas.

This shows that the claims accusing the Ottoman administration and its members of the crime of genocide are invalid and without sound or reasonable foundation. It is clear that the relocation was a legally justifiable measure by the state in order to protect its very existence.

NOTES

- 1. New York Times, May 19, 1985.
- "Bernard Lewis Denying the Armenian Genocide," http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jZy27-x- UM&feature=related.
- 3. European Court of Human Rights' judgment of December 17, 2013, on the *Perincek v. Switzerland* case, paras. 115, 116, 117.
- 4. "Il s'agit donc d'une notion de droit très étroite, dont la preuve est par ailleurs difficile à apporter. La Cour n'est pas convaincue que le 'consensus général' auquel se sont référés les tribunaux suisses pour justifier la condemnation du reqérant puisse porter sur ces points de droit très spécifiques."
- 5. Switzerland decided to appeal the ECHR ruling on the Doğu Perinçek case. The Swiss Federal Office of Justice announced on March 11, 2014, that the ECHR's Grand Chamber will be requested to review the ruling in order to clarify the scope available to the Swiss authorities in applying the Swiss criminal law to combat racism.
- Pulat Tacar and Maxime Gauin, "State Identity, Continuity, and Responsibility."
- 7. Although Turkey considered the Armenian case closed at Lausanne, Armenian nationalists still view the defunct Treaty of Sèvres as the basis for the resolution of Turkish-Armenian conflict. Furthermore, since the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, the governments of Georgia and Azerbaijan have accepted the Treaty of Kars, while the Armenian government's position is ambiguous in that respect. The Armenian Declaration of Independence and Armenian Constitution characterize Turkey's eastern provinces as western Armenia, so it could be reasonably deduced that Armenia does not clearly recognize Turkey's national borders as defined in the Kars Treaty.
- UN Vienna Convention of the Law of Treaties, article 28, United Nations Treaty Collection, chapter 23, "Law of the Treaties."
- 9. Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (*Bosnia and Herzegovina v. Serbia and Montenegro*), Judgment, ICJ, February 26, 2007 (hereafter *Bosnian Genocide*).
- 10. UNTS (United Nations Treaty Series), no. 1021, vol. 78 (1951), 277.

- 11. Prosecutor v. Akayesu, Case No. ICTR-95-4-T, Judgment, para. 521.
- 12. William Schabas, Genocide in International Law, 219-21 (quotation), 259, 262, 264.
- 13. Prosecutor v. Jelisic, Case No. IT-95-10-T, Judgment, para. 67.
- 14. Prosecutor v. Jelisic, Case No. IT-95-10, Judgment, para. 49 (Appeals Chamber, July 5, 2001).
- 15. Bosnian Genocide, para. 198.
- 16. International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the former Yugoslavia since 1991, Case No.: IT-95-10-A, July 5, 2001, Appeals Chamber Judgment, Item 48: http://www.icty.org/x/cases/jelisic/acjug/en/jel-aj010705.pdf.
- 17. Claus Kress, "The Darfur Report and Genocidal Intent," 572-73.
- 18. William Schabas, "State Policy as an Element of International Crimes," 966.
- 19. Schabas, Genocide in International Law, 207.
- 20. *Prosecutor v. Jelisic*, Case No. IT-95-Io-A, para. 101 (Appeal Chamber, International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, July 5, 2001): http://www.un.org/icty/jelisicappeal/judgment.
- 21. Dermat Groome, "Adjudicating Genocide," 919-32, 943, 955, 958, 967.
- 22. Paola Gaeta, "The ICJ Judgement on Genocide in Bosnia," 827-28.
- 23. Judgment of the International Military Tribunal, in *The Trial of German Major War Criminals: Proceedings of the International Military Tribunal Sitting in Nuremberg, Germany*, part 22 (London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1950), 444.
- 24. Bosnian Genocide, para. 166.
- 25. Ibid., para. 430.
- 26. Ibid., paras. 430, 431.
- 27. Ibid., para. 209.
- 28. Ibid., para. 210.
- 29. Ibid., para. 373.
- 30. Ibid., para. 401.
- 31. The court also stated that in order to ascertain whether FRY was responsible "for complicity in genocide" it needed to consider whether the organ or person furnishing aid or assistance to a perpetrator of the crime of genocide acted knowingly and in particular was aware of the specific intent of the principal perpetrator. The court was not convinced by the evidence furnished by Bosnia that these conditions were met (ICJ judgment, para. 422). Furthermore the court noted that a clearly decisive point in this connection is that it was not conclusively shown that the decision physically to eliminate the adult male population of the Muslim community from Srebrenica was brought to the attention of the Belgrade authorities when it was made (ICJ judgment, para. 423).
- 32. Stanford J. Shaw, *The Ottoman Empire in World War I*, 2:1095–99.
- 33. Edward J. Erickson, Ottomans and Armenians, 227.
- 34. Guenter Lewy, The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey, 43, 250.
- 35. Erickson, Ottomans and Armenians, 229.
- 36. For detailed information on this issue, see Yücel Güçlü, *The Holocaust and the Armenian Case in Comparative Perspective*, 11–12.
- 37. Erickson, Ottomans and Armenians, 162, 221.

- 38. Ibid., 213-14.
- 39. Ibid., 175-77.
- 40. Salahi R. Sonyel, The Turco-Armenian Imbroglio, 81-82.
- 41. Erickson, Ottomans and Armenians, 166-68.
- 42. Ibid., 162.
- 43. Ibid., 180.
- 44. Ibid., 181.
- 45. Ibid., 200-201.
- 46. Ibid., 162.
- 47. Ibid., 227.
- 48. Edward J. Erickson, "The Armenians and Ottoman Military Policy, 1915," 145, 148.
- 49. Shaw, *The Ottoman Empire in World War I*, 2:1052. See also Yusuf Sarınay and Hikmet Özdemir, eds., *Turkish-Armenian Conflict*, 65.
- 50. Erickson, "The Armenians and Ottoman Military Policy," 141-67.
- Sydney Nettleton Fisher, The Middle East: A History (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959), 365–66; Justin McCarthy, Esat Arslan, Cemalettin Taşkıran, and Ömer Turan, The Armenian Rebellion at Van, 176–257.
- A selection of these documents is now available in English: see Sarınay and Özdemir, Turkish-Armenian Conflict.
- 53. Yusuf Sarınay, "The Relocations (*Tehcir*) of Armenians and the Trials of 1915–1916," 317–40. For a somewhat different set of figures, see Shaw, *The Ottoman Empire in World War I*, 2:1098–99.
- 54. Lewy, The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey, 101–9; Mehmet Perinçek, Rus Devlet Arşivlerinden 150 Belgede Ermeni Meselesi, 141; Erickson, "The Armenians and Ottoman Military Policy," 150–55; Muammer Demirel, Birinci Dünya Harbinde Erzurum ve Çevresinde Ermeni Hareketleri (1914–1918) (Ankara: Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, 1996), 19.
- 55. Memorandum by Boghos Nubar Pasha, February 3, 1915. See Vatche Ghazarian, ed. and trans., *Boghos Nubar's Papers and the Armenian Question, 1915–1918*, 3–5; Hovhannes Katchaznouni, *Dashnagtzoutiun Has Nothing to Do Anymore* (Istanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 2007), 36–37.
- 56. Edward J. Erickson, Ordered to Die, 103.
- 57. Hikmet Özdemir, The Ottoman Army, 1914–1918, 136–39.
- 58. Justin McCarthy, *Muslims and Minorities*, 133; Özdemir, *The Ottoman Army*, 142–45; Jeremy Salt, *The Unmaking of the Middle East*, 67–68.
- 59. Michael M. Gunter, Pursuing the Just Cause of Their People, 21.
- 60. Salt, The Unmaking of the Middle East, 64.
- 61. Lewy, The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey, 250-52.
- 62. Shaw, The Ottoman Empire in World War I, 2:1076-78.
- 63. Lewy, The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey, 108.
- 64. Güçlü, The Holocaust and the Armenian Case in Comparative Perspective, 20.
- 65. Norman Stone, "Vote Turkey This Christmas," *Spectator*, December 18, 2004: http://www.spectator.co.uk/print/politics/all/12979/vote-turkey-this-christmas.html; see also Tarık Zafer Tunaya, *Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler*, 3:396.
- 66. Murat Bardakçı, Talat Paşa'nın Evrak-ı Metrukesi, 171.

Political and Human Landscapes of Anatolia in American Diplomatic Correspondence after World War I

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I would like to introduce a collection of U.S. archival documents pertaining to the period after World War I. These reports have not been fully examined in the context of Middle Eastern Studies in general and Turkish Studies in particular, yet they contain valuable information for researchers. My main objective is to show that American diplomatic correspondence of post-World War I Turkey is not uniform. This picture contradicts the image of the "terrible Turk" portrayed in the United States in the first decades of the twentieth century. More particularly, my goal is to present U.S. diplomatic correspondence for researchers who wish to challenge the view that the Ottoman Turks were villains predisposed to inflict as much pain as possible on the non-Muslim subjects of the Ottoman Empire. In fact some of these reports help change the image of Turks (or Muslims) from uncivilized vicious subhumans to humans who made terrible wartime mistakes. Some of these diplomatic reports depict their misery during and after World War I. This chapter particularly brings in reports prepared by U.S. diplomats about human conditions in Turkey between 1918 and 1925, including documents on the plight of the people (both Muslim and non-Muslim) of the Aegean, central Anatolia, and Black Sea regions.

World War I created a sizable volume of displaced people in Anatolia. The predicament of the population of Anatolia has been exploited for many different political discourses in the decades up to the present. I do not aim to support or contradict any particular political assertion with my findings. My primary goal is to demonstrate that enough primary

source material can be found in the U.S. archives to support or contradict any political narrative. This is the working hypothesis of my research.

I draw my documents mainly from microfilm collections titled "General Records of American Commission to Negotiate Peace, 1918–1931," "Records of the State Relating to Internal Affairs of Turkey, 1910–1929," and the Bristol Papers housed at the Library of Congress. I have divided my findings into two categories. The first group includes reports that describe life in several cities after World War I, just before the peace negotiations were concluded. These reports are very detailed and interesting in that they portray the hardships endured by the Ottoman cities during these years. By their very nature they are descriptive not argumentative. The second group deals with the condition of the Christian minorities in Anatolia after World War I, including reports on Greeks and Armenians living in Anatolia.

The first report in the first group is numbered 867.50/I, describing the living conditions in Constantinople, dated December 26, 1918. It was transmitted by American commissioner Lewis Heck to the secretary of state, but the author of the report is Luther R. Fowle, a member of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) in Istanbul.¹

The following documents portray these conditions in different parts of the Ottoman Empire.

LIVING CONDITIONS IN CONSTANTINOPLE

One report commented on prices and conditions in Constantinople (Istanbul):

For adults in good health, the question of living conditions in Constantinople is merely a question of money. Foods of most kinds can be had in abundance by those who can pay for them—but the mass of the people are suffering much. The charge for board in the American Colleges, that used to be \$200 per annum before the war, is now \$1,000 and at this rate the College suffers a loss.

Pension for a single person costs from \$150 to \$200 per month and is found with difficulty. American families already established in Constantinople and keeping house for themselves most modestly expend over \$100 per month per head. To live in a good hotel costs about \$450 per month for board and lodging.

Cost in cents of certain staples are as follows: *per pound* Sugar \$1.75, rice .90, white beans .45, kerosene 1.00, tabutter [butter?] 5.00, cheese 1.20, cooking butter 3.50, meat 1.60, flour .50, wheat .35, potatoes .25, milk .50.

Eggs .18 apiece, rubber galoshes \$30.00, shoes \$75.00, spool of thread \$1.50, man's suit of clothes \$200.

In February 1918 the Ottoman Minister of Finance stated in Parliament that prices had increased since the beginning of the war two thousand [2,000] percent for food-stuffs, and this still holds true. The ration of gold to paper currency is four to one. Hence, if gold can be imported, increased cost of living drops from 2000 percent to 500 percent.

No serious epidemic exists at the present time but the city is very dirty and the service of various public utilities—water, lights, trams, etc.—is most irregular and often cut off owing to the lack of fuel. It is to be expected that the entry of the Entente Forces will make possible an improvement in this regard.

The above is the situation, as it existed on December 7th, five weeks after the signing of the Armistice. There is no prospect of improvement in the immediate future. The Entente Forces are importing all their own foodstuffs, thus avoiding local prices almost entirely.

Children and adults without a definite work to do should not go nearer to Constantinople than Egypt or Italy until after May 1919.²

Lewis Heck, the author of the report, points out the great increase in the cost of living in Constantinople and concludes that the 1,000 percent increase in July 1917 resulted from (1) scarcity of supplies; (2) difficulties of transportation; (3) inflation of the currency; and (4) inability to replenish stocks of imported goods due to the blockade:

The main special cause was the action of political and even governmental agencies in concerning the market in certain staple lines and in charging very high bribes for means of transportation.... The bread is the only foodstuff which has been rationed with a degree of success. During the summer of 1917 the "vessika" or ration bread was extremely poor consisting of corn meal mud [?] for days at a time. In the autumn of 1917 the control of rations was taken over by the military authorities and conditions were at once improved owing partly to the new crop and to the better

organization effected under military control. This improvement did not last for a long time and by the summer of 1918 the quality of bread was almost as poor as in the previous year.

Apart from bread there are distributions of sugar, cheese, matches, olives, and potatoes, but these articles were never given out with any regularity or in any considerable [quantity]. Three quarters of a pound of sugar per head used to be distributed about one piasters in three months at a charge of the 20 piasters an oke....

In order to maintain the local water, electric light, tram and ferry services, the city of Constantinople requires about 1200 tons of coal a day. The Germans used to send here from Germany an average of about three hundred tons of coal and coke a day. After the Armistice these supplies from Germany were not only cut off and local stocks exhausted, but owing to the disorganization of the Turkish military department, most of the workmen, who were under military discipline, stopped work at the mines of Zongouldak. It is also reported that German officers stationed there caused much damage to the machinery of the mines before they left. As a result, there was a period of about three weeks without electric light. It was at this time that public order was at its worst when the disorderly elements were encouraged by the darkness of the streets. There was much shooting in the streets at night, and often several men were killed in one night. There were a number of political murders at the same time. This situation is now much better; the authorities have decided to disarm the population of the city but this measure will not be carried out with any degree of efficiency in the prevailing circumstances....

Since the latter part of December, it has been possible to maintain the electric light service more regularly so that now it does not go out for a very long period. The electric tram service has stopped running since the beginning of December chiefly from lack of coal and also because the company does not wish to resume operations until the Municipal authorities permit a decided increase in its tariffs (as much as 400 per cent).

The water service was poor all through 1918, as the pumping apparatus at Lake Dercos was out of order and the water flowed for only a few days each week. Now there is water for several hours each day, but only a small supply and none can be used for street cleaning.

The Bosphorus and other boat services are limited by lack of coal, and boats are always dangerously overcrowded, although so

far there have been no accidents. The service of the railways in both Asiatic and European Turkey is also limited because of short supplies of fuel....

Persons returning to Constantinople are very much impressed by the great number of people in the street who seem to have no occupation. This is due first to the fact that everybody must go on foot and also to the fact that trade and industry are almost at a complete standstill....

During the war and especially the last two years some very great fortunes have been made in this country by people who were either in the government or who had the right sort of connections with men in authority. The figures of the amounts made by many persons are fantastic when one considers the utter misery and destitution of 95 per cent of the whole population. [They keep their money in Germany and Austria.]...

The ordinary Municipal services of the city, such as the removal of garbage, cleaning the streets, etc., are very poor and the city is generally in a filthy condition, both the street and the people themselves, who have been obliged to keep on wearing the same clothes for several years due to lack of textiles....

With all the poverty prevailing in Constantinople, it is nevertheless in certain ways one of the best stocked cities in the world for those who have money to pay high prices. There are [only] very few commodities, which cannot be obtained here [even] if a sufficient amount is paid.³

This report vividly describes the desperation of people in Constantinople, the capital city of the dying Ottoman Empire. Comparisons can only be imagined for nonprominent Ottoman towns. During these troubled periods, Ottoman citizens awaited the signing of a peace treaty to normalize their lives, at least to a degree.

I have not seen any other report that describes the postwar realities in a city as dramatically as Heck's report. But other reports were collected mainly from the ship captains of the U.S. Navy under Admiral Mark Lambert Bristol's command or missionaries who had been in those locations. These usually came from port towns, and their main aim was to describe the conditions of the non-Muslim populations. For example, a document numbered 86748/7 written by H. A. Hatch on April 11, 1919, describes Samsun:

We found conditions in Saumsoum [Samsun] quite encouraging. In place of the five thousand reported to be starving in the streets, we found that the soup kitchens were handling the cases of the destitute and that while the prices were high, they had already commenced to fall and no actual famine existed. For example, eggs, which we had understood were non-existent, were selling lower than in New York.

We took two automobile trips, one on land, one along the coast, and found a surprising number of sheep and the land, which appears to be exceptionally rich, fairly well cultivated. The political situation was quiet, unquestionably owing to the presence of 200 British troops. There are, however, 2000 armed Greeks in the nearby mountains who are a decided menace and who refuse to surrender until a government is established which will assure their safety when disbanded.

No massacres were reported at Saumsoun but deportations of large numbers took place under conditions which resulted in great sufferings and loss of life. We saw some of the Greek villages which have been completely destroyed. This was done by government troops on government orders. It seemed to be confined to certain districts said to be among the most prosperous in this region. More or less contraband trade in rifles had been carried on between the Russians and Greeks in the district in question.⁴

This report portrays a less desperate picture. Readers should keep in mind, however, that the author expected a lot worse and was pleasantly surprised. The existence of soup kitchens indicates a degree of social and political order. The report credits the 200 British troops for this. It claims that some Greek villages were destroyed by government troops. I cannot challenge this information, although the source of the information that the orders were given by the government could readily be questioned. It presumably was the government in Istanbul, as the government in Ankara had not yet been established at the time. The information on the rifle trade between the Russians and Greeks is significant: we know that soon afterward the Russians were the sole suppliers of rifles for the Turkish nationalists.

Until the occupation of İzmir (Smyrna) on May 15, 1919, the political mood in Anatolia seemed to be subdued: people's lives were on hold. Muslims and non-Muslims were awaiting the signing of a peace treaty

with the prospect of getting back to a level of normalcy. But things would change overnight for the worse with the occupation of İzmir, especially in terms of intercommunal relations.

Admiral Mark Bristol, the U.S. high commissioner who chaired the committee investigating atrocities committed by both Greeks and Turks in İzmir provided an account of the occupation. Four days after the occupation of İzmir Mustafa Kemal landed in Samsun, which has been accepted as the commencement of the Turkish national liberation movement. Within a three-year-period Greeks were pushed back from western Anatolia. On September 9, 1922, the Turkish forces recaptured İzmir. On September 13, 1922, the infamous Great Fire of Smyrna took place, which caused great destruction in the city. This fire was indicative of the intercommunal troubles that lay ahead. Most importantly it gave the Allied powers an excuse to accuse the Turks of wishing to wipe out the Christian population in Anatolia entirely. This fire provided a great opportunity (especially for Great Britain) to pressure Turkey in the international platform for the new peace treaty that would replace the Treaty of Sèvres. In 1922 Lord George Curzon of Great Britain pushed the Americans to participate in an Inter-Allied Commission of Inquiry into the Greek Occupation of Smyrna. After much debate in the United States Admiral Bristol was instructed to chair the commission. It is clear from Bristol's reports to Washington that Curzon's main aim was to pressure Turkey about the upcoming peace negotiations, not necessarily an honest attempt at finding out what took place.

The problem for Curzon was that Admiral Bristol was very much interested in the facts. In his report numbered 867.4016/529 on June 9, 1922, Bristol advised the U.S. secretary of state as follows:

We should bend every energy to insure not only critical examination of events in Anatolia during the past six months, but primarily the fullest publicity for a report which shall place these events in their proper historical, political and religious perspective. To accomplish this, it will be essential to take cognizance of the Smyrna investigation of 1919 and the Allied investigation of 1921 into Greek atrocities of Allies.... The Commission will find information from native sources unreliable and one-sided and will therefore necessarily rely on first-hand information principally upon American missionaries and relief workers in Anatolia. Practically none of these workers have been in territory under Greek control so their evidence will almost entirely be confined to acts

in territory under Turkish control. Unless therefore our representatives on Commission insist upon proper perspective, we will find the American name in Turkey publicly identified with one of the several conflicting partition of views of the Turkish question now held with obvious results of entangling the United States in Near Eastern political intrigue.⁵

In other words, unless the commission remained neutral to uncover all the atrocities from (relatively) independent sources, the report would not be treated as factual and would tarnish the nonpartisan image of the United States in the Middle East.

This obviously was not what Great Britain wanted. In a separate report Bristol implied that Curzon wished to accomplish three things with his proposal of a commission:

- Secure a good ground for breaking off negotiations with the Turks and withdrawing concessions made in the last peace proposals, the Turks refuse to accept the commission of inquiry.
- 2. Get the Allies together in their Turkish policy on a platform from which it would be very difficult for any dissent. He presumably wants the United States to participate not only for the reason of impartiality stated in his telegram but also because it would be difficult for France to refuse to join if we should do so.
- 3. To quiet the pro-Greek pro-Armenian sentiment in England, which is very strong.⁶

In reality Bristol was questioning the humanitarian aspect of the proposed commission and highlighting the political goals behind it. This situation continues to be true at present, in that foreign powers try to exploit human tragedies that took place during and after World War I for political purposes. In the same document Bristol suggested a mediation between the Greeks and the Turks. Otherwise, he warned, the Turkish atrocities against the Christians would continue, especially in the hinterland, where the Allies did not have any control and many Christians resided.

The Inter-Allied Inquiry did not produce a result that could be embraced by Great Britain or Greece. It listed atrocities committed by both sides and concluded that the Greek side bore the most responsibility for

the atrocities committed. The Turkish side, however, also was on the receiving end of some criticism. Interestingly, although the Allied powers commissioned the report, David Lloyd George of England convinced his colleagues in other Allied countries that this report should never be made public. In the British House of Commons he stated that the report was not fair, for no Greek was a member of the inquiry. I am not claiming here that the report was fair; clearly this might be debatable. But the majority of Western sources have always had a tendency to question the neutrality of any document that fails to put blame on the Turks, while no such critical approach has been applied in the reverse situation. The role of the historian should involve approaching all reports with equal skepticism. We know that Admiral Bristol tried to do just that, for which he was called "pro-Turk," in an obvious attempt to discredit his conclusions. For example, a British report from Constantinople labels Bristol clearly as "pro-Turk." Many Christian lobbyists who sympathized with the Armenians also used the label for him. Bristol responded as follows:

I [am] quite aware of this idea of a good many people but this opinion I believe came from the fact that in this part of the world if you maintain a strictly neutral attitude without being "pro" any of the races or nationalities, the latter immediately believed you were not only not in sympathy with their cases but were even "anti" to the cause of each. There was only one thing I tried to be and that was pro-American and strictly impartial as regards every nationality and race.¹⁰

In talking to Bishop J. H. Darlington in Constantinople Bristol stated blatantly: "There is nothing pro-Turk about me, but if you do not advocate an independent Armenia, the Armenian propagandists state I am favorable to the Turks or pro-Turk." The Department of State, Division of Near Eastern Affairs, was bombarded with letters from Christian lobbying groups accusing Bristol of being pro-Turk, not fully sympathizing with the aspirations of the Christian minority, and being more interested in pressing U.S. business than in U.S. philanthropic interests in the Middle East. A memorandum by secretary of state Allen Dulles states that he received many letters advancing these accusations against Admiral Bristol. Dulles, however, noted:

[I]n addition to the strong support of all [of] our business interests in Constantinople, [Bristol] enjoys the confidence of many of the missionary and relief workers in the field, especially those who

have adapted themselves to the existing situation rather than to a conception of the situation based on pre-war experience.

It is true that Admiral Bristol is not always as tactful as he might be. He has been outspoken in his belief that the various races of the Near East are very much alike, and that it is not just to tell half the story by mentioning only Turkish outrages without any reference to atrocities which have been committed by Greeks and Armenians or errors of policy of great powers which have thrown the Near East into a turmoil and aroused the national and religious feelings of Moslem against Christian.... In my opinion he deserves the Department's continued support, even though we may expect further criticism against him from the same sources.¹³

This memorandum clearly indicates that the State Department was fully aware of the discrediting activities of some Christian lobbies in the United States and that Bristol's neutral stand was appreciated and relied on. Accordingly, Admiral Bristol continued to send reports prepared by himself and his staff to Washington. He did not shy away from criticizing the Turks and documenting the atrocities committed by the Turkish side. Bristol was motivated by two main factors. First, he wished to further U.S. interest in Turkey. Second, he did not care for manipulating the information for a political purpose. His reports shed light on the human landscapes after the capture of İzmir in 1922.

NON-MUSLIMS OF ANATOLIA AFTER THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

The U.S. diplomatic records are full of reports complaining about the mistreatment of Christians, especially the Greek Orthodox and the Armenian population. Yet an overwhelming majority of them were prepared by those who were party to the conflicts. In other words, as might be expected, almost none of the reports are independent. It was mainly the members of the Christian population in Anatolia or their sympathizers who prepared these reports. U.S. ambassadors or later high commissioners relayed these reports to Washington without critically examining them. This practice ended with Admiral Bristol, who insisted on preparing or relaying reports by paying attention to their reliability. For example, when discussing the Armenian plight with Bishop J. H. Darlington, Bristol countered the argument that Cilicia was mostly Armenian and that this information was reliably based upon carefully prepared birth records. "This was all true, but there was one thing that the Patriarch

did not inform the Peace Conference, and that was the record of deaths, so the records of the population based on births was correct, but it was not correct as regards the population of the district." ¹⁴ This conversation shows how detail-oriented and fair-minded Bristol was. He asked his staff to be as neutral as possible.

Bristol's trade commissioner's report describes life in Ankara:

Angora [Ankara] has changed a great deal since I was there in 1921. There are a great many shops and hundreds of additional soldiers.... During my stay there I observed many Armenians and Greeks in the city walking on the streets and going about their business as they have always done. I saw both Armenian and Greek priests on the streets and they apparently had all the liberty that any one also had and went their ways unmolested. Two of the Greek priests called at the Assembly building on Mustapha Kemal Pasha on Thursday, May 17, and were received by him just minutes before I paid my respect. I went up on the hill within the walls of the old fortress where I know there was an old Greek church more than 600 years old. I found that it was in no way destroyed and services were held regularly and that the old priest who was there in 1921 was still there. I saw him personally and on entering the church found one Greek woman engaged in prayer.¹⁵

The same folder contains reports prepared by the ship captains under Bristol who were patrolling the Black Sea. A report by J. B. Rhodes, the captain of USS *Litchfield*, describes the refugee situation in several coastal towns by the Black Sea:

Unieh, Turkey

There are about 350 refugees here, 300 of whom are Greeks and the rest being Armenians. The conditions are good, about half of them having means of their own and all are working and earning their food. There are no refugees in nearby villages and there have been no new arrivals lately. They live in different houses around the city, depending upon where they work. There is very little disease, as all refugees are vaccinated. No refugees are leaving the city either by steamer or going into the interior. There are about 150 Greek bandits in the hills, but as they never come into the village, they are very little cause for worry to the Turk.

Fatsa, Turkey

In the village there are about 1300 Greek and 100 Armenian refugees. The conditions are good. About half are working; many have means of their own and a few are in need of food. About 400 refugees have recently arrived at Fatsa. They live in Greek houses. There is practically no disease among the refugees. A doctor inspects daily and administers to the sick if there are any. All refugees have gone to a nearby village for work, but none have left the city by steamer. There are no bandits around Fatsa.

Kersunda [Giresun], Turkey

There are about 300 refugees here most of whom are Greek. Conditions are good; most of the refugees are working. There is no disease among them and all have been vaccinated. None have left the city by steamer but a few have gone into interior villages to look for work. There are no bandits in or near the city.¹⁶

These reports indicate that non-Muslims still existed in towns despite the level of trust between the communities being at an all-time low. Greek bandits existed in the Black Sea mountains as late as 1923.

In reference to intercommunal relations, a report dated June 6, 1923, by Robert T. Young, the commanding officer of the USS *Edsall*, also gives a bit of information about Muslim refugees. Muslims are rarely mentioned in reports. Admiral Bristol relayed this report to Washington in the same way he did others.:

There were also Turkish refugees offside of Inebolu [İnebolu]. Mr. Crutcher of the Standard Oil sent a wire to (Constantinople) requesting authority to afford relief to those refugees. The reply from the Near East Relief came five days later on 12 June 1923, indicating that for those Turkish refugees, grits, flour and clothing were being shipped. Rushdi Bey, President of the local Red Crescent, will wire to have foodstuff landed, get it through customs and have automobiles ready to take it inland.¹⁷

As noted, this account is one of the rare reports indicating that Muslims were also displaced and in need of relief work and that some form of help was given to them by the Near East Relief via the U.S. Navy.

Captain Young reported from Trabzon harbor on June 8, 1923, The U.S. missions fed 2,764 refugees a day:

Mr. Grant (a Near East rep.) informed me of the refugees. There are only two cases of typhus and no smallpox. He further informed me that tomorrow, 9 June, the Vali will issue a proclamation prohibiting sale of tickets to Greeks and Armenians to sail Trebizond [Trabzon].... Mr. Grant first informed me it is because of the conditions in the refugee camps at Constantinople; that the steamers would not take refugees only as far as Constantinople, and due to conditions in Constantinople, the authorities did not desire any more to come there. I did not know of any unwarranted conditions existing in Constantinople at departure, so later brought up the subject of the reason again. He then informed me he believed it was a proclamation desired by the Turks. The reason, the Armenians and Greeks are the artificers (skilled workers), and the workmen, and they are absolutely essential at Trebizond. This was coming more towards the real reason.

This also contradicts the claim that Turks wished to expel all non-Muslims in Anatolia.

The same ship arrived at İnebolu on June 14, 1923, to deliver the goods for the Turks, as noted in Captain Young's diary:

The welcoming at Ineboli [İnebolu] was most cordial. On arrival ashore we were met by Turkish officials went to the Mayor's office, and at about 14:30 started for Kure.... Kure is about 7 miles inland by sea, but 55 kilometers by road. The trip was made in a Fiat bus and a Ford. Kure has an elevation of 1200 meters and the road although an excellent road bed, showed poor upkeep, consequently far from satisfactory condition.

On arrival at Kure the citizens and small children were drawn up in a line as a reception committee. They were most grateful indeed for the relief.

The facts of the relief are as follows:

Population of Kure 1700 Families 380 Houses and buildings burned 116 Homes remaining approximately 25.

Relief afforded: 14000 pounds of grits, 7000 flour and 1600 pounds clothing.¹⁹

Judging from the ratio of burned buildings to the standing ones, we can conclude that the Turkish towns were badly damaged. The wars put the Muslim population of Anatolia in a desperate situation, just like their non-Muslim fellow citizens. The main distinction was that their desperation was not highlighted in U.S. reports as much as that of non-Muslims. The Middle East Relief also extended its help to Muslims, for which Admiral Bristol received some criticism in the United States but much praise in Turkey.²⁰

The U.S. High Commission collected information from missionaries, business owners, and visitors as well. For example, C.B. Wylie, an employee of the Standard Oil Company, describes his inspection trip through Anatolia, reporting that the religious minorities, particularly Greek and Armenians, were leaving Turkey en masse in 1924:

I was greatly interested throughout the trip to ascertain the Turks' feeling towards foreigners in general and Americans and Jews in particular. In the southern part of the country there is undoubtedly a strong anti-foreign feeling which covers all nations and races, but French and Armenians in particular. This applies to the towns of Adana, Aintab, Marash and Ourfa. It was in this region that the French carried out an exceedingly stupid policy of occupation with Armenian troops.

In Aintab, Marash and Ourfa, regular sieges were undertaken with bombardment of the towns, later followed by the evacuation of the French troops and massacre of Armenians. In Ourfa, not an Armenian left, while in Marash and Aintab there are a few who are connected with the American institutions....

It was naturally among the Armenians that our missionaries found fertile ground for conversion, schooling and general education. These people are now faced with the fact that there are no Armenians left and that their future work must be with the Turks. However, the Turks are suspicious; they remember the close association of the missionaries and the Armenians and they see the Armenians still in the compounds of the institutions.

Throughout the interior, from Diarbekir to Sivas, there are here and there a cluster of Armenian families in which the women and children are preponderant, but their ranks are rapidly thinning, and it can be safely assumed that by the end of the year not a single Armenian will be left in Anatolia.... In order to get away, these people are selling their real property (they have nothing else) at prices that defy all competition. For instance, a fine fertile little garden valued at Ltqs gold 500 went for Ltqs gold 30, and the purchaser made Ltqs 15 on the deal by cutting off the 45 trees

and selling them for Ltqs 1-each. Of course the value of the garden was destroyed.

In Northern Anatolia, where the Greeks were the strongest, those that are left are rapidly being shipped in the exchange of populations, and this operation should be completed within a couple of months. We shall then witness a real, true Turkey for the Turks. A few Levantine French and Italians will be left, but their number negligible.

Every town visited was from one quarter to three quarters in ruins. Villages ranged from three quarters to complete wrecks. The havoc caused in the interior is really indescribable. It should be borne in mind that the ruined towns and villages back of Smyrna had been in the theatre of warfare or trampled over by a retreating defeated army, but the section covered by my trip was at no time in the war zone, except the towns of Aintab, Kars and Erzeroum.

The havoc and destruction [have] been caused by the Turks themselves, who will destroy a \$5000 house by tearing out the roof...for firewood....

[The Turks] don't want foreigners resident among them, but in no way do they object to their visiting their country or travelling through it. This feeling is not as intense as it was a year ago, and will no doubt continue to decrease with time. In many points we found expressions of regret that the Armenians and Greeks had gone. A year ago the expression of such a feeling or thought would have been considered as treason and dealt with accordingly.²¹

This 1924 document indicates that when the nationalist victory became certain in eastern Anatolia and the hopes for a European or U.S. mandate were dashed, non-Muslims were leaving en masse, afraid of reprisals for their cooperation with European (mainly French) forces. Many Muslims clearly were taking advantage of the plight of exposed and vulnerable Christian locals, such as selling a farm for 30 Turkish pounds that was worth 500. It is quite possible that the locals used intimidation tactics to force out their Christian neighbors for material gain. What is significant is that the last paragraph informs us: "In many points we found expressions of regret that the Armenians and Greeks had gone." Although such sentiments were certainly in the minority, these kinds of statements support my claim that the situation after World War I was

extremely complicated. Hence we cannot make blanket statements about the intercommunal relations in Anatolia. Yet, as noted above, the U.S. archives contain many documents that portray the Turks in a very bad light. Accordingly, public opinion in the United States was not favorable toward the Turks. For example, the president of the American College for Women in Constantinople, Dr. Mary Mills Patrick, summarized the mood: it was impossible for anyone in the United States to say anything in favor of the Turks. She could not tell the truth about the situation, so she simply kept quiet.²²

A few more examples show the prejudice prevalent among the public in the United States. The State Department, thanks to Bristol's reports and explanations, held a more balanced view of the Turks than the public did. But local churches throughout the United States preached against the "terrible Turk." Peter Buzanski states that "the weight of the Protestant churches in America was thrown on the side of the Armenians. Church-going Americans were apt to hear a Sunday sermon dealing with Armenians as they were to hear one dealing with purely spiritual subjects. Hence the stereotype of the 'terrible' Turk became ingrained in the American mind." Albert Bushnell Hart, a noted American historian, likened the Turk to a "Near Eastern Ku Klux Klan," unfit to be ranked with civilized nations as an equal. 4

A small number of humanitarians stationed in Turkey with the Near East Relief, however, were bothered by some false, exaggerated, or one-sided pictures of the area. These people showed discomfort with the misinformation circulated in the United States and said so. They did not object to the description of the suffering of the Christians at Turkish/Muslim hands, but they were not happy with the overgeneralizations about the Turks and political manipulation of the information.

CHALLENGING THE IMAGE OF THE "TERRIBLE TURK"

The U.S. archives contain documents that dispute the stereotyping of the Turks as terrible. Admiral Bristol was not the only American who left documents challenging the events in Turkey as they appeared in the United States and Europe. Among these sources Mary Caroline Holmes's accounts are noteworthy.²⁵ She was a member of the Near East Relief mission in Urfa and a reliable eyewitness to many atrocities in the city. Like Admiral Bristol, she tried to stay away from making one-sided statements just to discredit the Turks and the emerging Turkish state. In this context her letter to Admiral Bristol in response to some misinformation

against the Turks in Urfa is "remarkable," as noted in internal correspondence in the State Department's Division of Near Eastern Affairs. The unknown author of the report indicates that Holmes was the director of Near East work in Urfa and observes that her letter "gives rather a different picture of the Turks than that we have received from Yowell, Ward and others. The difference is partly to be ascribed to the fact that Miss Holmes is a woman of tact whereas our other reporters have been lacking in that quality." ²⁶

Mark H. Ward and Maj. Forrest D. Yowell, two relief workers, were expelled from Turkey by the Kemalists in 1922.²⁷ They gave interviews blasting the Turks and their treatment of the Christians in Anatolia and accused the Turks of massacring 1 million Armenians, aiming at the extermination of the Christian minorities of Anatolia.²⁸ Holmes's letter to Admiral Bristol protested the misinformation:

My Dear Admiral Bristol:

You will see by the date of this letter [May 29, 1922, Bassoul's Hotel, Beirut] that I am at last out of Urfa. For more than two years it has been quite impossible to send any communication to you owing to warring conditions exceedingly difficult for foreigners....

We were never restricted [by the Turks] as to the scope of our work, never interfered with, and no monetary demands were made....

The mutasarrif, Munir Bey, new mutasarrif of Aintab, called one day to tell me about the repatriation of the Kurds from Van-Bitlis districts and, in rather a hesitating way, asked if any assistance in sending the 5000 he was responsible for would be along the line of activities of the Near East Relief. These Kurds I knew were deportees, like the Armenians and suffered quite as much as they from starvation and disease. He said he asked in the name of Nihat Pasha, then the commander of Jezereh Front with headquarters in Deirbekr [Diyarbakır], that any contribution should be sent directly to the Pasha. The next day I sent a contribution of L.T.G. 100 to Munir Bey, with a note in which I said I felt it wholly within the scope of our relief work to repatriate the Kurds.... I received not only a most grateful acknowledgment from him but Nihat Pasha sent a long telegram of thanks from Deirbekr as well....

The government in Urfa was one of the best in Turkey. During my residence there I saw nothing which savored of oppression, with the exception of the taking of the property—real estate—of those Armenians who asked for vesecas [visas?] to go to Aleppo. The vesecas were granted, but any real estate must be signed over to the government. Lately, they were not allowed to sell their property. Aside from this the Armenians have nothing to complain of in Urfa....

All of the foregoing is but the prelude to a protest to you against the sweeping accusations of Mr. [Forrest D.] Yowell, late Director of the Near East Relief in Kharput [Harput] as printed in the London Times of May 5th. Certain of his statements cannot be substantiated by the facts. He has jeopardized not only the N.E.R [Near East Relief] activities in "Kemalistan," but missionary work as well.

Mr. Yowell stated that the relief workers along the route of the Greek deportees were not allowed to render any assistance to the dying nor to care for the orphans. In a conversation today with Mr. Mackensie, who was Treasurer of the N.E.R. in Kharput, I learned that the Kharput authorities did allow the N.E.R. to distribute bread to the deportees "at times." It is true that the deportees were sent on from Deirbekr through a mountainous region in cold and snow, and that many perished by the way in consequence. And so did more than 1000 Armenians who tried to go out from Marash [Maras] when the French evacuated that city in the winter of 1920. They went with the French, a terrible storm of deep snow came on, and not less than 1000 fell by [the] wayside. Those who survived from Kharput and reached Deirbekr were all cared for by the N.E.R. at the request of the Government [emphasis in the original]. The adults were clothed, fed and given medical attention and orphans gathered into our N.E.R. Orphanage. Not only did the civil and military officials cooperate with Miss Wade, the Director, but when a gendarme guarding the deportees was proven to be immoral or extortionate upon request of Miss Wade he was promptly replaced and often dismissed from the service....

It is so manifestly unfair and unjust to make *wholesale* [emphasis in the original] charges against a government with which our own government has at present no diplomatic relations, not to say unwise and within whose territory we have been living by courtesy and, so far as my experience goes, given every assistance when it was possible for the authorities to render it. As an old resident in Turkey, I protest with all my heart and soul against the wholesale

accusations of Mr. Yowell, many of which cannot be verified, as I have indicated above....

I hold no brief for the Nationalists. Neither do I for the Greeks and Armenians. We Americans are here to relieve suffering and to care for homeless children. *Christian and Turk alike have committed atrocities, without doubt* [emphasis added]. But we relief workers, as I see it are not the judges as to the placement of the guilt.

We know that the Turkish side protested Ward and Yowell's account as fabrication and the Swedish paper Social Demokraten labeled the massacre accusations as lies.²⁹ However, this report is very significant because it was prepared by a co-worker of Ward and Yowell. Mary Caroline Holmes is the author of a book Between the Lines in Asia Minor which certainly cannot be labeled as Pro-Turk. Therefore, her testimony regarding the false propaganda against the Turks had merit in the eyes of the State Department. We learn from this report that Ward and Yowell had personal vendettas against the Turkish government since they were deported from Turkey. We also know that it was not only the Christians, but also Muslim Kurds were among the group of deportees from Diyarbakır. These statements in the U.S. archives do not allow us to subscribe to the grossly generalized statements that the Turks, in the post World War period, systematically targeted and massacred Christians to purify Asia Minor. Nevertheless, the reader should be mindful of the nuance that these reports do not claim nor prove that Christian massacres did not take place. Indeed they did take place. Yet they also confirm that Christians were not always at the receiving end and that, as stated by Ms. Holmes, "Christian and Turk alike have committed atrocities, without doubt." This was not an apology or a political statement; it was merely stating the facts.³⁰

CONCLUSION

In order to set the stage I started out this examination of the U.S. sources with a document vividly depicting the desperate outlook of Constantinople (Istanbul) immediately after World War I. The imperial capital city was the symbol of the wealth and the might of the empire. The report vividly depicts the deplorable conditions in the capital and helps to visualize the conditions of other parts of the empire. The subsequent documents presented here deal mainly with the plight of people trying to live

under these harsh postwar conditions. An overwhelming majority of the reports dwell on the Christians and the intercommunal tension.

World War I not only deeply affected the material foundation of the empire but more importantly plagued the psyche of its citizens. The religious affiliation of the victors (the Allied powers) created mistrust among the Muslim and Christian (Armenian and Orthodox) population of the Ottoman Empire. The CUP leaders in Constantinople were paranoid about the possibility of Armenians betraying the empire with Allied help. Interestingly, it was the Muslim Arabs who served the British interests and were more destructive for the well-being of the empire than the Armenians or Greek Orthodox population. This paranoia is understandable and certainly had a basis. Yet none of the atrocities against the civilian population initiated by the government forces or under government protection should be justified. The U.S. archives are filled with documents detailing the anguish and misery of non-Muslims reportedly caused by the Muslim population or allowed by the government. These reports vary from the highly questionable accusations of those who were disappointed to see the victory of the Turks against the Allies during the War of Independence to those who objectively reported what they saw on the ground. Reports by the Christian population in Anatolia and their contacts in the United States indicate that many local Armenians and Greeks held clear grudges against the Turks and even to an extent against the Western powers for the failure to create Armenian and Greek states in Anatolia. The bias is notable in these kinds of reports. Sizable collections of reports fall into a middle category, and their reliability could cause a challenge even for the trained historian. In this period of confusion and conflicting political ambitions the truth could readily be lost. Motivations for political manipulation certainly did exist.

Against this background, I have presented examples of a very small minority of documents that contradict the majority of the documents portraying the Turks as uncivilized and vicious subhumans. These documents lift the image of the Turks to the level of humans who made terrible wartime mistakes. Some of them even depict their misery. The scholarship is so polarized at present that even mentioning the terrible conditions endured by the Turks/Muslims is regarded as political and certainly taken as disrespect for the suffering of the other side.

Reports that do not fully sympathize with the Christian plight do exist, however, so how do we read them? Should we ignore them entirely for the sake of amplifying the atrocities certainly committed by the Turkish side? Partisan scholarship tends to accept the documents that support

their own political agenda and dismiss the opposing documents. As Admiral Mark Bristol responded to the accusation of him being pro-Turk in the 1920s, many academic works even in the twenty-first century dealing with this controversial subject are highly politicized and polarized. Unfortunately, even now anyone who does not subscribe to a view in its entirety is accused of being an agent of the other side. My purpose in pointing out reports in U.S. archives that raise questions about the stereotyping of the Turks as "savages" who wished to exterminate the Christian "race" in Anatolia is not to diminish the tragedy experienced by the non-Muslims in Turkey. I just want to provide readers with information that is not readily available to those who wish to tackle the issue from the center.

It is possible that documents presented by both sides portray a degree of reality. These seemingly contradictory snapshots of descriptions prove that it is deceptive to draw a big picture based on majority and minority documents. In the case of the Greeks and Armenians as minorities in the post–World War I period, we should be careful not to make overgeneralizations, for information in archives is not unanimous.

NOTES

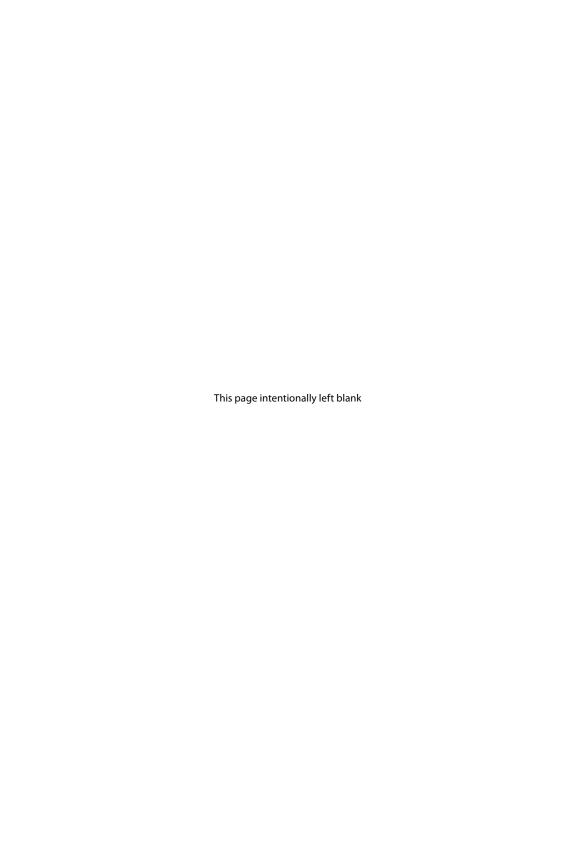
- The ABCFM was the first foreign mission agency in the United States, officially chartered in 1812.
- 2. U.S. Archives, collection titled "Records of the State Relating to Internal Affairs of Turkey, 1910–1929." Any document cited in the following text that starts with the number 867 comes from this collection. Report 867.50/1 sent to the Department of State by Lewis Heck on January 30, 1919. The same folder contains more detailed information about daily life in Constantinople.
- 3. Ibid.
- 4. 867.48/7, April 11, 1919.
- 5. 867.4016/529, June 9, 1922.
- 867.4016/502, "Memorandum on Earl Curzon's Request for American Participation on a Commission to Investigate Turkish Atrocities" May 15, 1922, prepared by Mark Bristol.
- 7. 867.00/192, "Greek Lootings of Turkish Houses in Smyrna," May 18, 1919, Constantinople. This is a telegram from Admiral Bristol to the American Mission in Paris (for the peace negotiations), which stated: "Greeks, Smyrna, reported looting houses, making many arrests, occasional street fights, few killed. Christian population inland apprehensive, Greeks undertook task beyond their power. New Ministry under Ferad [?] probably coalition and less unfriendly to Entente." Another report by Bristol on July 17, 1919, indicates that Turks and Greeks were killing each other (867.00/315). Bristol also notes Turkish atrocities. For example, a report numbered 867.00/325 dated July 19, 1919, claims that the Turks nailed horseshoes

- on the wounded Greeks. The same report also indicates that intercommunal rivalry was not just between the Turks (Muslims) and the Greeks (Christians). In the same report Bristol claims that Catholics were the main rivals of the Greeks.
- Peter Michael Buzanski, "Admiral Mark L. Bristol and Turkish-American Relations, 1919–1922," 69.
- "Admiral Bristol must be regarded as a confirmed pro-Turk": Mr. Henderson to Mr. MacDonald, August 5, 1924, in Bourne, Kenneth and Cameron Watt, eds., British Documents on Foreign Affairs, 30:207.
- 10. 867.00/1884, Bristol to the secretary of state, dated July 17, 1925.
- 11. Bristol Papers, Library of Congress, Box 2: Bristol's War Diary, dated June 24, 1920.
- 12. At the time Allen Dulles was working for the Department of State; he later became the director of the Central Intelligence Agency.
- 13. 867.4016/596, "Memorandum for the Secretary," June 15,1922.
- 14. Bristol Papers, Library of Congress, Box 2: War Diary dated June 24, 1920.
- 867.00/1685, Jullian E. Gillespie, U.S. Trade commissioner's trip to Angora [Ankara], June 23, 1923.
- 16. 867.00/1685, "Summary of Refugee Situation," June 1, 1923.
- 17. 867.00/1685.
- 18. Ibid. (emphasis added).
- 19. Ibid.
- 20. Isabelle T. Dodd passed on a note to Admiral Bristol from Ualide Harum (Halide Hanum?), a graduate of Constantinople College, a woman's school established by the American Friends of the Near East. The note, dated February 18, 1919, stated that the admiral's declaration of Americans' helping people in Turkey with no regard for race or religion was most welcomed. The Turkish student asked Dodd: "Do thank [Bristol] and tell him that he is the first Christian who has said it openly and it has melted the hearts that were bitter and hardened.... We will never forget it." Bristol Papers, Library of Congress, Box 1.
- 21. 867.00/1817, Robert M. Scotten, interim chargé d'affaires, to secretary of state (August 15, 1924), relaying a report by C. B. Wylie, a member of the Constantinople office of the Standard Oil Company, to the general manager, Mr. Campbell, dated August 6, 1924.
- 22. Buzanski, "Admiral Mark L. Bristol," 85.
- 23. Ibid., 84.
- 24. "Reservations as to the Near Eastern Question," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 108 (July 1923): 122 (quotation); Buzanski, "Admiral Mark L. Bristol," 84.
- 25. Holmes was the principal of the American orphanage for Armenian children in Urfa and a member of the American Near East Relief Mission. In her book she refers to a remarkable incident in the city: "It would have been a town devoid of every human instinct which would not have been moved with pity for the three hundred Armenian women refugees who approached Urfa stark naked, having been robbed off their clothing some days before. These were all cared for in the town, and many lived the four years following in Moslem homes. Some of them were legally married to Moslems, others served as domestics in their houses unmolested and unafraid": Mary Caroline Holmes, Between the Lines in Asia Minor, 31.

- Clearly she was not a pro-Turk apologist who manipulated and censored information that cast the Turks in a bad light.
- 26. This letter is registered in the U.S. archives as 867.4016/768.
- 27. Mark H. Ward was a medical doctor who was sent to Turkey as a medical missionary for the Near East Relief in 1915. From 1918 he was stationed at the Harput unit as the medical director and temporarily as acting director, where he organized relief work. Forrest D. Yowell was the director of the Harput branch of the NER until May 1922.
- 28. Mark Ward sent a letter to secretary of state Charles E. Hughes, reporting on the condition of the Christians in Anatolia (867.4016/575), on May 5, 1922. A careful historian might note that Ward reported that he and Yowell gave many numbers based on hearsay. They also listened to the accounts of local Christians, who were desperate to capture the attention of Western powers. This does not disqualify the report as false, but it does bring the credibility issue to the fore. Both Ward and Yowell were very public in their accusations against the Turks: see *New York Times*, May 6, 1922, 2; *London Times*, May 5, 1922. This letter presumably was taken from the U.S. archives, but unfortunately it has no folder number to check its authenticity. There is no reason to doubt it, however, because the information matches the information from other sources.
- 29. 867.4016/580 deals with this issue. The report was sent from Stockholm on July 6, 1922, from the U.S. minister H. Johnson to the secretary of state. From this report we know that the Swedish newspaper disputed these claims. The diplomat claims that such blunt denial of massacres was "inspired" by Kemal Bey, the Turkish minister (diplomat) in Sweden. The report includes a portion of the article blaming the British for these lies: "The reports of Turkish massacres of Christians in Asia Minor are lies, probably originating from the British in order to strengthen anti-Turkish propaganda. This paper refers to the 'campaign of hate started in England against Turkey in order to make a peaceful agreement impossible and to permit a further offensive against Turkey."
- 30. Holmes, Between the Lines in Asia Minor, 31.

PART V

The Balkans and World War I



From Ottoman to Mediterranean Empire

Italian Colonial Rule in the Dodecanese Islands and the Second Treaty of Lausanne

Valerie McGuire

It is a truism in Italian Studies that historiography has overlooked Italy's colonial project and turned its critical eye instead on British and French imperial rule. Coming late to nationhood (1861), and even later to its first colony (Eritrea, 1890), Italy's weaker position in comparison to other major colonial powers has ultimately shaped an enduring legacy of modern Italy as inconsequential in the history of modern European empires.¹ This misperception of Italian colonialism as insignificant underestimates the place of the nation's colonial projects in producing the discourses of race at the heart of the ideology of Italian fascism and neglects the place of Italy in the history of World War I and the period of Ottoman dissolution. Italy's desire for empire drove its alliance with the Entente so as to retain territories gained in the Italo-Turkish War (1911–12) and impacted eventual strategies of governance in those territories that it eventually integrated in the aftermath of World War I. This chapter attempts partially to recuperate Italy's place in the history of empire after World War I and Ottoman dissolution by giving a short analysis of how fascist occupation of the Dodecanese Islands consolidated the construction of Italian empire not only in terms of strategy but also in terms of Italy's political and cultural imagination.

Situated along a critical fault line between modern Greece and modern Turkey, the Dodecanese Islands fell under Italian sovereignty by virtue of the Second Treaty of Lausanne. The same treaty provided for the population exchange between Greece and Turkey in order to end the ethnic conflicts in Anatolia, the so-called Asia Minor catastrophe or Greco-Turkish War. For the Italians who came to rule them, the islands

curiously combined elements of internal and external colonialism. One ideologue referred to them as a tabula rasa that would negate Italy's previous position as negligible in inter-European imperial geopolitics and chart the way toward a new history of Italian imperial glory. Yet the Italian nationalist imagination also viewed the islands as a relic of the Ottoman world with different religious communities living in peace under the "benevolent" aegis of Italian, and now fascist, empire. Italy's new colonial regime in the islands ultimately gained momentum through projects aimed at eradicating the Levant or the Ottoman world, which had so fascinated European travelers in the nineteenth century, and to supplant this with an image of Mediterranean imperial rejuvenation. The island of Rhodes in particular was to become an icon of Italy's "restoration" of Italian culture to the eastern Mediterranean while becoming subject to massive urban renovations and beautification, especially in association with the introduction of an economy of tourism.

Strategies of colonial governance, in the same vein, aimed to transform the perception of the population of the archipelago as "white" in race and Christian in ethnicity. The fascist regime achieved these objectives in large part by deploying the concept of the ethnic minority introduced by the Lausanne Treaty (originally visualized as a means to end the Greco-Turkish conflict and to protect minority rights) in such a way as to legally enforce an ethnic and cultural transformation of the islands.

THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN IN THE ITALO-TURKISH WAR (1912)

The eastern Mediterranean as part of Italian expansion emerged during the second part of the Italo-Turkish War (1911–12) when Italy moved to consolidate its colonial conquest of Libya. Italian nationalists hailed the capture by fiat of the Dodecanese Islands—meant to put pressure on the Ottomans and force them out of Libya—as a sign that Italy was soon to realize its belated colonial dream. Although the size of the territory was slight in comparison with Libya and the islands were mostly nonarable, the archipelago had enormous strategic value. It allowed Italy a foothold in the eastern Mediterranean near the straits of Dardanelles. The archipelago could act, in the words of one ideologue, as a "trampoline to launch a few jumps in case others should jump and alter the balance of the Mediterranean." Italy alleged to the Great Powers that the occupation was temporary and would end when all remaining Ottomans had evacuated the Misurata and Cirenaica provinces. Yet the Italian foreign

office later attempted to exchange the islands for a piece of Albania. Permanent annexation of the islands eventually made a deep impact on the overall geography of power in the region—and Italy finally succeeded in achieving it by means of realpolitik.⁴

Diplomacy over formal Italian rule of the archipelago ended when first the Balkan Wars and then World War I broke out. 5 The Entente ultimately promised Italy permanent sovereignty over the archipelago in order to ensure its entrance into World War I. It later reneged on this commitment, contributing to Italian embitterment over their treatment in the Versailles Treaty. Benito Mussolini achieved formal annexation in 1924, one of his first feats as Italy's newly installed strong-arm man and a sign that he would soon realize the Italian dream of the east. From the outset of Italian occupation, from the time of the 1912 conquest, the archipelago's role was as much rhetorical and representational as it was strategic. It was a potent site for the recuperation of symbols of Italy's previous military and maritime dominance of the Mediterranean and for the formulation of a cultural idiom that could define a new era precisely through its backward glance at Italy's prior imperial glories. Members of the Italian Nationalist Association (ANI) that visited the archipelago after its informal occupation vividly described victory over the Turks as a triumph of the Christian Mediterranean. Their attachment to the island of Rhodes was affective; it was a Mediterranean landscape steeped in Italian imperial history. This was not only mare nostrum (Roman rule of the Mediterranean) but also Venetian and Genoese maritime empires and the rule of the Knights-Hospitaller, Christian crusaders who had held the island during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. According to Enrico Corradini, Rhodes was capable of making the hearts of Italians swell with national pride. He spoke of a morally regenerating experience. "In each one of us was the joy of national conquest, as if for the first time visiting a new possession." This exuberance was all the greater because Italy was to realize its dream of an Italian colonial Levant: "That joy was so much more inebriating because the island was beautiful and splendid in the most pure spirit of air and in the most radiant sunshine of the Orient."6

Corradini's sentence construction implies a crucial rhetorical trope of Italian expansion that would also characterize the fascist period in the islands: the army's arrival on Rhodes was like a landfall on a new possession: occupation marked Italy's "return" to the Orient. When passing Lepanto, site of a historic defeat against the Ottoman Empire, Corradini likewise exclaimed that "the Italian who travels toward Rhodes relives the most beautiful history of Italy." Conquest of the Dodecanese

Islands marked a renewal of Italy's glorious victories of a bygone golden age. Writing under the pen name Giulio De Frenzi to protect his political career from his salacious journalism, Luigi Federzoni paid homage to the soldiers who had "liberated" Italy's Greek "cousins" from Ottoman domination. He described a gunner who in a thick Neapolitan dialect (the symbol par excellence of Italy's subalternity and cultural vicinity to Africa) recited the names of the territories that Italy had conquered: Tripoli, Homs, Tobruk, and Derna but also Stampalia, Rhodes, the Aegean Islands, and its future Ottoman conquests, including Constantinople.8 As the Levant was becoming a relic of the past, dissolved into nation-states and protectorates, Italy claimed the region for colonization and transformation into the heart of its "renewing" Mediterranean Empire. Mussolini was famously to say not long after taking power in Rhodes that "Italy can only go to the East. To the West well-defined states have been formed. We can only spread out our arms there, and even this one day may be forbidden or reduced. The lines of Italian expansion are therefore toward the Orient."9

Obliquely referring to the French annexation of Tunisia in 1881, which had led to extreme embitterment in Italy given the large community of Italians who were residing there, Mussolini laid claim to the idea that the Dodecanese Islands would not become another missed opportunity. 10 Italy was keenly aware of the way in which partitioning former Ottoman territories among the European powers could potentially transform into another "Scramble for Africa" that shunted the nation from the spoils of European colonialism. As Italian deputy Orazio Pedrazzi remarked: "But we see in any case that all are increasing their territories and planting their flags in the place of half-moons chased away by Catholicism, Protestantism, and even English Judaism." ¹¹ Expansion into the eastern Mediterranean also gave Italy an opportunity to integrate into the national body the so-called Levantini (non-Muslim merchants of varying "Italian" descent that had lived in the Levant for several centuries) and to continue its colonial campaign of demographic expansion without also introducing settlement colonialism.¹²

Arguably the Italo-Turkish War transfigured Italy's failed project of national unification, which had succeeded in creating a situation of internal colonialism. Antonio Gramsci eventually called this *la questione meridionale* or Southern Question. It was therefore not a coincidence that the Libyan and Dodecanese invasions occurred on the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of the nation. Expansion in the Mediterranean revived the rhetoric of unification: it would become the fulfillment of the revolution

that had failed in 1861. Enrico Corradini had championed the conquest of North Africa as a way "to give the mezzogiorno [southern Italy] a nation in its hinterland in North Africa." He remarked that the style of the Italian troops in this war had a "youthful character." Corradini compared the invasion to Garibaldi's march on southern Italy because it was "quick and effective, ardent, concluding with the completed fact." ¹³ Colonial war was an act of vitality that likened the Italians to Romans and promised to transform the emigrant nation into a conquering nation. The ethnic Greek population of the Dodecanese Islands became implicated in these narratives of imperial war as national regeneration. Corradini and Federzoni projected fantasies of colonial transformation vis-à-vis their Greek "cousins." Corradini remarked that, like Italians, Greeks "belong[ed] to the great proletarian nation" dispersed throughout the Mediterranean and still under Ottoman rule because of a "conspiracy" of European plutocracies: "between the hills and the sea is the open plain, cultivated with difficulty by the Greek farmer, humiliated into torpor, humiliated by usury and the collection of Turkish taxes. The European plutocratic civilization that safeguards its Turkish interests ignores that in the middle of the Mediterranean there is such an inhabitant." ¹⁴

Corradini anticipated what was to become an important point of Italian foreign policy during fascist rule: Italian occupation of the Dodecanese archipelago would help to undermine British and French power in the eastern Mediterranean. Indeed the military base on the island of Leros was key to later fascist plans to annex parts of Anatolia. Parallels between Italy and the nation's Greek cousins in the Aegean were also to have some practical consequences on the ground. Under fascist rule Dodecanese Greeks were viewed as potential actors in Italian schemes for empire from Africa to the Balkans.

The island of Rhodes remained central to Italy's view of its mission in the region as one of restoration of the Mediterranean—a place where Greeks, Italians, and other Christians had once prospered, which could easily be regenerated given these prior Italian eras. The panorama of the medieval city reminded Corradini of the towers of San Gimignano in Tuscany, the bucolic landscape of inner Rhodes as opposed to coastal Rhodes of the Sicilian countryside: the louvered windows and stone alleyways of the medieval city of Rhodes were a new Pompei. The very colorful Levantine landscape suggested a path toward an alternate vision of empire that differentiated Italy from the decadence of European Orientalism: "Rhodes, so stuck in the past, was all the same a sovereign seat of poetry, an unexpected marvel of the Mediterranean. Would it be

like this if it had fallen into the hands of European population?...But we Italians will be the delicate and potent population that will know how not to deform Rhodes, by renovating it, restoring to it a mission in the Mediterranean, between Europe, Africa, and Asia, to which it is joined." ¹⁵

Corradini pledged that Italian rule over the islands would direct itself toward renewing the islands in a fashion that was fitting for a Mediterranean power. Yet the so-called regeneration of the island of Rhodes contained a caveat: Italian colonial modernity in the Mediterranean depended on an image of the Ottomans as a foil to insecurities about being "backward" and "belated" imperialists. As Federzoni and Corradini eagerly stressed the Italian troops' efficiency and their benevolent treatment of the prisoners-of-war, a virulent anti-Turkish strain ran throughout their texts. Federzoni described "tragicomic accidents" that had occurred at the prison mess hall due to Turkish inexperience with the use of the knife and fork. 16 Corradini described how Rhodes was a palimpsest of Greek, Italian, but also Ottoman elements in the landscape that gave the Italian troops a sense of their new crusade in the eastern Mediterranean. He marveled over the strange poetry of the island of Rhodes, where shacks of the locals barely clung to the old fortifying wall of the medieval knights and orange trees and prickly pear bushes grew wild. He wrote that Rhodes was a typical Mediterranean city with a "cesspit of populations," from Greeks and Jews to Turks and Arabs. 17 This gritty sight made Italian visitors feel that they had wandered back in time and assured them of the immanence of their modernity, assuaging fears of Italy's belated national and colonial project.

POST-OTTOMAN SUBJECTS OF THE FASCIST MEDITERRANEAN

Italy outwardly maintained that it had constructed a new *pax romana* on Rhodes, the icon of its Mediterranean empire. Yet there could be no question of annexing the archipelago as another province of Italy, as the nation had done in the Triestine and Alto-Adige regions, the other territorial gains of World War I. The administration instead annexed the archipelago as a department, which ambiguously placed the territory as neither a colony nor a province of Italy. One keystone of annexation was the creation of *cittadinanza egea italiana* (Italian Aegean citizenship) for Dodecanese persons residing in the archipelago at the time of the Lausanne Treaty. The creation of this unique status held several political

and strategic advantages for the regime. For one thing it displaced the issue that the archipelago's inhabitants could not be viewed as colonial subjects. The demotion of privileged Dodecanese metropolitan citizens who had enjoyed a special relationship with the Ottoman Empire to colonial subjects would have incited diplomatic upheaval. In the new era of "self-determination" and after years of British patronage of an independent Hellenic nation, Greeks could no longer openly be viewed as non-Europeans. Fascist citizenship policy ultimately prevented Dodecanese persons from becoming Greek nationals. Yet it also importantly kept them separate from Italian citizens and Italian emigrants. While one fine day Dodecanese persons would become fully fledged Italian metropolitan citizens, their religious traditions as former subjects of the Ottoman millet meant that they could not be integrated as Italian subjects. 19

Italian Aegean citizenship was an ingenious package of propaganda and surveillance. While providing an outward description of Dodecanese subjects as "citizens," it was also an effective means for initiating Dodecanese subjects into a system of patronage that could help to ensure the population's imperial loyalty.²⁰ Aegean citizenship excluded Dodecanese persons from the right to vote and included an easy, if lengthy, process of petitions in order for them to naturalize to full Italian citizenship. It remained in Italy's discretion to what degree it administered ad hoc instances of Aegean citizenship, issued sui generis on the basis of the special conditions of the Second Lausanne Treaty (which had awarded Italy sovereignty over the islands), to Dodecanese persons living abroad at the time of annexation. Emigration between Egypt and Anatolia but also to even more distant locations such as East Africa, the United States, and Australia, was a staple of Dodecanese life. Many persons professed unawareness of the change in regime when later requesting to reside or maintain property in the archipelago. Petitions included obsequious statements about a "lively" desire to become citizens of the regime. Sufficient cause for rejection of a petition was lack of "good moral and political conduct," which usually meant being either a Communist or a Hellenic patriot. This discretionary politics also had a gray area: being poor, undesirable, or too clearly "Levantine" also became grounds for not receiving residency in the islands.

While Italian Aegean citizenship was not necessary in order to be a legal resident of the archipelago, it was a prerequisite to receive the benefits of welfare programs and paid jobs of corporatist Italy and to carry out everyday practical matters. Stories of industry and modernization have since colored popular memory of the era: the Italians are popularly

remembered as "good people" (kali anthropoi). 21 Governance documents, however, reveal that ethnicity and racialization undergirded what Italy viewed as a benign civilizing mission meant to restore a bygone era of Mediterranean empire. The Italian government, for example, justified its refusal of the extradition to America of a Turk who was originally from Rhodes because he "did not belong to the ethnic majority of the islands, which is known to be of the Greek Orthodox race and language."²² The most dramatic use of the ethnic minority provision was the deployment of the 1938 anti-Semitic Racial Laws in the archipelago, which led to half of the Sephardic Jewish community being stripped of Italian Aegean citizenship and eventually to their expulsion. All Sephardic Jewish persons who had received an ad hoc Italian Aegean citizenship as non-natives of the islands were forced to leave on the basis that they did not belong to the ethnic majority of the islands.²³ Most of them were refugees of the Asia Minor catastrophe or the Greco-Turkish War and had arrived in the islands after 1923. The local administration initially had responded very favorably to ad hoc petitions for citizenship. Mussolini affirmed in a cable that it was in Italy's interest to issue citizenship on a case-by-case basis, especially to persons who were financially prosperous.²⁴

Despite the more favorable rhetorical attitude toward ethnic Greeks as cousins of Italians, Dodecanese Greeks were also not excluded from fascist discourses of race. A Catholic missionary on the islands described how Greeks were well known "not to be pure descendants of the Hellenes." Years of Ottoman rule meant that "they cannot have preserved their race unharmed and without mixture." 25 But Greeks found themselves in the position of transforming into Italians if they were willing to collaborate in fascist imperial schemes. A 1934 revision to the Aegean citizenship law made it possible for Dodecanese persons to achieve full metropolitan Italian status through military service. Expressing loyalty to the empire and its projects was one legal route toward becoming Italian and achieving full Italian citizenship. A young physician from Rhodes who was residing in Alexandria, for example, was able to obtain Italian metropolitan status because of his commitment to the regime. The remarks in his file said that Giorgio Peridi "had [during his permanency on Rhodes] nourished Hellenic sentiment, but he did not make any overt political propaganda and he behaved well toward the authorities." In Alexandria he had been an employee at the Benito Mussolini hospital and had demonstrated great loyalty by "assiduously attending lessons in Italian culture and literature that are given at the Fascist Center and obtaining good results."26 The Italian administration thus affirmed Peridi's

desire to go to colonial Eritrea and complete the required military service for the regime's imperial project in East Africa.

Conversion to an Italian empire was importantly reserved not only for an educated elite but also for illiterate Greek peasants. When Italy repatriated from Ethiopia to Rhodes its Dodecanese Greeks who were Italian Aegean citizens, on the eve of Italy's 1935 invasion, this event was viewed as a sign of future imperial loyalties that would emerge with the empire's expansion. The author of a cable to Rome describing the repatriation narrated how the experiences of one zealous peasant in Italian East Africa had made him bitter about lacking a strong nation and made him think of his Greekness as barbaric. The surveillance report from 1935 described how a crowd had gathered around him to listen as he declared his ardent desire to become an Italian: "If I knew how to write I would publish who the Greeks are because you don't know them, but once you do know them you will hate them as I do because they are as barbaric as the Abyssinians. The Italians are in contrast civil, good, and human and if it weren't for the Conte Vinci to save us we would be lost. So why not love the Italians? And why not want to be Italian?"27

The peregrinations of this zealot had taught him that to be Greek was to be primitive—as barbaric as an African. Born in Addis Ababa, this particular Italian Aegean subject had never seen Rhodes until the forced evacuation on the eve of the Italian gassing of Ethiopia. Pursued by the Ethiopians, his file states, he turned to a Greek nationalist, who promptly turned him over to the Ethiopians because he was "Italian" (or had Italian Aegean citizenship). After receiving an injury, he was rescued by the Italian foreign ministry. These adventures had led him to conclude that the Italian foreign minister in Ethiopia was "civil, good, and human," according to the Italian author of this cable, and his savior from the infamy of being Greek. Although the number of Greeks who eventually petitioned for full Italian citizenship was relatively small, their history buried in the archives has much to say about how Italy, under fascist rule, aimed to incarnate ideas of the strong, corporatist, and imperial state and to co-opt the loyalty of its Greek population colonized in the eastern Mediterranean.

The promise to "restore" Italian empire in the Mediterranean was quite like Mussolini's promise to rejuvenate the nation and prepare it for fascist revolution. Any study of the Dodecanese Islands raises questions about what was the difference between internal and external colonialism in the Italian case. The rhetoric that the Italian empire used to rescue its Greek cousins from Ottoman degeneration also eventually became

a project of ethnic and cultural transformation to convert the locals to the ideology of the regime and the project of *italianità* (Italianness). The project had many affinities with cultural programs on the peninsula aimed at remaking the identity of Italians from a tender age; Italian rule occasioned the arrival, for example, of the Opera Nazionale Balilla (the fascist youth organization).

Fifteen years after Italy had annexed the Dodecanese Islands, Mussolini invaded northern Epirus in 1939 and began occupation of Albania, the Dalmatian coast, and Greece. Marking the invasion were the dictator's famous words that Italy would "break the back of Greece." These territories in the immediate Mediterranean were to act as the so-called small space of Italian empire that "was to be reserved exclusively for the civilizing ethnic group" and that "interacted with a great Mediterranean space in which the European populations would have the right to exist." The Dodecanese Islands were a key juridical model for these new Balkan citizenship and assimilation projects and the blueprint to implement a "Roman" way of life.

The invasion of the Balkans requiring Adolf Hitler's assistance finally spelled the demise of Mussolini and the end of the Italian colonial dream. Yet the impact of fascism's attempt at conquest of the Mediterranean was to be long lasting. Thanks to fascist rule, when Greece formally integrated the Dodecanese archipelago in 1947, it had already been transformed into a predominantly ethnic Greek Orthodox territory. Moreover, its identity as a cultural buffer between Europe and the eastern Mediterranean was firmly entrenched in colonial economies, institutions, and narratives about its long and diverse history as the crossroads of various eras of imperial rule.

NOTES

- 1. See Ruth Ben-Ghiat and Mia Fuller, Italian Colonialism, 1-20.
- 2. Orazio Pedrazzi, Il Levante mediterraneo e l'Italia, 91.
- 3. Ibid., 42 (all translations are mine).
- 4. Richard Bosworth, "Britain and Italy's Acquisition of the Dodecanese, 1912–1915."
- 5. Phillip John Carabott, "The Temporary Occupation of the Dodecanese Islands."
- 6. Enrico Corradini, Sopra le vie dell nuovo impero, 122.
- 7. Ibid., 74.
- 8. Luigi Federzoni, L'Italia nell'Egeo, 101-108.
- "L'Italia non può andare che ad Oriente. Ad Occidente infatti vi sono formati statali ben definite. Non possiamo mandare che delle braccia, ed anche questo ci potrà un giorno o l'altro essere vietato o ridotto. Le linee della precisa espansione

- italiana sono quindi verso Oriente." Cited in Pedrazzi, *Il Levante mediterraneo e l'Italia*, 41–42.
- 10. Italians residing in Tunisia outnumbered French colonists and continued to present a threat to French sovereignty for the entirety of French colonization. Mary Dewhurst Lewis has shown that Tunisia was integrated into metropolitan France, like Algeria, because of the increasing pressures that the Italian state could exert upon France as a result of the large number of residents in Tunisia applying for and successfully receiving Italian citizenship. Mary Dewhurst Lewis, "Geographies of Power."
- 11. Pedrazzi, Il Levante mediterraneo e l'Italia, 42.
- 12. Sabina Donati, "Statutis Civitatis' and 'Italianità," 183.
- 13. Corradini, Sopra le vie dell nuovo impero, 222 (emphasis in the original), 111, 185.
- 14. Corradini seems to refer here to the "head tax" of the Ottoman Empire, which was essentially a tax "to keep one's head," as Greeks popularly recall. In reality the Dodecanese Islands were known as "privileged" within the Ottoman Empire because they were exempt from this tax. Ibid., 127.
- 15. Ibid., 106.
- 16. Federzoni, L'Italia nell'Egeo, 105.
- 17. Corradini, Sopra le vie dell nuovo impero, 101.
- 18. Stereotypes of Greeks as backward, superstitious liars also upheld civilizing British discourses and the rationale for their protectorates in the Balkans and eastern Mediterranean region. See Thomas Gallant, Experiencing Dominion.
- 19. Pedrazzi, Il Levante mediterraneo e l'Italia, 40.
- 20. Alexis Rappas, "Greeks under European Colonial Rule."
- 21. Nicholas Doumanis, Myth and Memory in the Mediterranean.
- Archivio Storico del Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Rome, Italy (ASMAE), Envelope: 993/1929.
- 23. The Racial Laws were deployed in the islands as they were in Italy and prohibited Jewish persons from owning businesses, attending schools, and marrying non-Jewish persons.
- Αρχεία Νομού Δωδεκανήσου/General State Archives of the Dodecanese Prefecture, Rhodes, Greece (hereafter GAK) 93/1927/163, Circular #78, "Cittadinanza dei Dodecannesini," October 2, 1925.
- 25. Corrado Prodomi, Memorie di un missionario di Rodi-egeo, 1913–1920, 73.
- 26. GAK: 323/1935.
- 27. GAK: Envelope 1493:1935.
- 28. Davide Rodogno, Fascism's European Empire, 70.

A Reason to Break the Hague Convention?

The Habsburg Occupation Policy toward Balkan Muslims during World War I

Tamara Scheer

And I, a Turk said, I surrendered, because you are allied with the Sultan dewleti Ali. Now you are like my brothers.

— Diary of Roda Roda

Roda Roda, a former k.u.k. (kaiserlich und königlich: imperial and royal) officer during World War I and active writer on the Austrian propaganda front, wrote down his experience when he entered the town of Novi Pazar together with the k.u.k. army at the end of 1915. This time the axis powers had been successful and conquered Serbia. As he was active in propaganda, Roda would not write something down that would not fit into the official state image of friend and foe. He drew a picture of circumstances that showed a more than friendly attitude on the part of those who were occupied. This chapter therefore examines the overall Austro-Hungarian occupation policy, including the perceptions of the personnel engaged.

When dealing with the Austro-Hungarian policy toward occupied Balkan Muslims during World War I we have to consider the preceding history to understand why a specific policy was applied.² Policy is always created by human beings. Decision makers always bring in their ethnic and religious background, political ideology, personal experience, and interests, including prejudices and preferences. Occupation policy regimes often were not based solely on planning but on reactions due to daily necessity. The preferential treatment of Muslims in the Balkans had more than one cause: old perceptions of the military leaders of friend and foe

and whom they wanted to help and the alliance with the Ottoman Empire, enriched by new local experience of who was willing to cooperate.

The preference then even went far beyond breaking the Hague Convention. It was signed by Austria-Hungary in 1899 and finally on October 18, 1907 (entered into force on January 26, 1910). The role of an occupier was covered in chapter 4, "The Laws and Customs of War on Land." But we should not mix up the Hague articles and what was declared after the war to be a war crime, such as the effort to denationalize the population of an occupied territory.

PERCEPTIONS OF FRIEND AND FOE FROM THE NINETEENTH CENTURY TO THE SARAJEVO INCIDENT

Perceptions in Austria-Hungary of the Ottoman Empire and the Muslim population(s) in the Balkans shifted. They did not change among all ethnic groups of the Habsburg monarchy—that would be another story—but among most members of the state elite, especially those who were interested in the empire's future. For centuries the Ottoman Empire had been declared the archenemy. Austria-Hungary and the Habsburg rulers had propagated their role as a protector of Christian Europe and of all the Christians who were forced to live under Ottoman Muslim rule in the Balkans. In 1893 (the anniversary of the siege of Vienna) huge festivities once again took place all over Austria-Hungary, celebrating the victory over the Ottoman army. But this traditional and stable pattern of describing the Ottomans already had become a bit shaky. Political changes had taken place in the Balkans and in Austria-Hungary, which opened the floor for discussions that did not fit into the century-old accustomed scheme of friend and foe.

The perception of "one nation—one state" since the French revolution had ruled European policy and public discussion throughout the nineteenth century. This slogan must have had influence particularly on those countries in Europe that had been characterized by multiethnicity, such as Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire. Both had to react to various national movements that influenced their regional and overall policy. But before members of the Austro-Hungarian elite started to discuss what they had in common with their old foreign enemy they were faced with internal political questions. These included how to guarantee stability not only inside the multiethnic empire but also at the borders—in particular in southeastern Europe. Territorial expansion was one

possibility for a political approach to foreign affairs, mostly expressed by the imperial army's leaders.⁷

Following the Treaty of Berlin, Austria-Hungary succeeded the Ottoman Empire in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1878. This incorporation included one more ethnic and religious facet into the empire. One-third of this former Ottoman vilayet's population was Muslim—most of them Slavic, some Turkish. In Berlin a slogan was propagated that official Austria-Hungary upheld until the twentieth century. "Status quo" meant that they had a strong interest in having no political territorial changes in the Balkans, which in the end supported the Ottoman Empire by preventing Serbia and Montenegro from enlarging at its cost. This was a difficult situation to manage because of the parallel effort to seek diplomatic friendship with Serbia and Montenegro. But the status quo led to another conviction that overcame traditional images: supporting the Ottomans in their remaining parts of Europe, even where a large part of the population was Christian.

THE EXPERIENCE IN THE FORMER VILAYET OF BOSNIA AFTER 1878

The Ottoman Empire's status quo in the Balkans and administration in Bosnia-Herzegovina ceased in 1878. But generations of high-ranking Austro-Hungarian politicians and army members experienced Ottoman rule in another place for many years. The Austro-Hungarian presence in Sandžak (Sanjak) Novipazar/Plevlje started in 1879, formally based—like the regime in Bosnia-Herzegovina—on the Berlin Treaty. The European mandate stipulated different duties and rights for Austria-Hungary but also for the Ottoman Empire. The two empires had to ensure peace and order together in this "benighted" region, as the contemporary media wrote, which bordered Serbia in the east and Montenegro in the west.¹⁰ The population was half Muslim, half Christian. 11 Because the Ottoman administration remained in control Austria-Hungary was much more an observer than an intervening force (and in no sense an occupier). For thirty years more than three thousand soldiers and two hundred officers garrisoned in the towns of Plevlje, Prijepolje, and Priboj experienced this multiethnic part of Europe. They reported on an Ottoman administration challenged with almost the same situation as Austria-Hungary: nationalism and the attraction of nation-states bordering the empire. The different reactions of the Ottoman Empire to these challenges showed that it had no effective protection against the zeitgeist of nationalism.¹²

Depending on this experience the friend/foe perception of the Austro-Hungarian representatives working in the sanjak shifted, although the old and the new perceptions ran parallel for a while. The view of oppressive Muslim rule on which the rulers had based the Austrian-Hungarian presence therefore became threatened, not exclusively as a result of the cooperative attitude of the local Ottoman administration. The image of Muslims shifted from former rulers to future victims if Serbia and Montenegro split the sanjak. The image of Christians whom they tried to protect changed too. Austro-Hungarian representatives found the origin of the negative national propaganda in Serbia (less in Montenegro), supported by the local orthodox elite. In the beginning the reports written in the sanjak named them as Christians in the beginning and later mostly as (threatening) Serbs.

A lot of research was done on Bosnia-Herzegovina, but when Austria-Hungary annexed it in 1909 the most reliable part of the population had been the Muslims and the Croats, at least the Serbs. This shift is comparable to the sanjak experience, where the Ottoman Empire and the Muslims were declared to be more or less the only reliable force in the region. This shift can be traced in the official, personal, and published documents of the leading figures of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy.

THE FIRST BALKAN WAR

The First Balkan War was another experience that helped to stabilize a new friend-foe perception of the Austro-Hungarian state elite before World War I not only because of what happened in the belligerent countries but because of their own situation in a multiethnic empire. ¹⁶ The leading (German-speaking) public media saw two groups: those who openly expressed their support for the Ottoman Empire and the others. The first group included Germans and Hungarians (after decades of political struggles). Especially the Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina had been declared loyal to the common state by Austro-Hungarian rulers. ¹⁷ As Milorad Ekmečić notes, their behavior was also due to the declaration that everyone who opposed the Ottoman Empire was a foe and any supporter was a friend. At least officials in Austria-Hungary and in Bosnia-Herzegovina supported the Ottoman Empire, so the Muslims declared their loyalty not only openly but on the streets. ¹⁸

In contrast the Slavs of the Dual Monarchy were often seen as a future internal threat. The *Marburger Zeitung*, a newspaper published in the Slovene and German-inhabited town of Marburg (today Maribor),

openly addressed this: "Every decent person in Europe sympathized with the Turks." This practically excluded the Czechs and south Slavs from being considered decent. This future friend/foe perception was defined most directly by newspapers with editorial offices located in multiethnic regions, on the "language frontiers," in the words of Pieter Judson. Taking sides with one party or the other among the struggling groups in the Balkans in the end brought new frontiers and allies and perceptions for the state elite in Austria-Hungary—especially high-ranking army officers. The state elite in Austria-Hungary—especially high-ranking army officers.

THE OCCUPATION REGIMES IN SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO DURING WORLD WAR I

At the end of 1915 and the beginning of 1916 Austria-Hungary implemented occupation regimes in the main parts of Serbia and in all of Montenegro.²² As many internal administrative and published reports stated, this successful conquest took place with the support of the indigenous Muslim population.²³ One of the first measures taken then had been the release of Serbian prisoners of war of Muslim faith. Propaganda pictures officially titled "Muslims among the Serbian POWs are receiving permission to return home" spread, despite censorship.²⁴

One military general government was set up in Belgrade, the other one in Cetinje. Both had been split into district commands (*Kreiskommandos*), responsible for carrying out the occupation policy on the lowest administrative level. Above all the occupation regimes had to fulfill the back area's duties, including keeping order to secure the frontlines and exploiting the countries' resources as much as possible for war efforts. In addition the high command needed to win the hearts and minds of the population and to treat them fairly. These tasks could hardly be fulfilled.²⁵ Possible success in the end depended on the tact and skills of the local commanders and the reaction and willingness of the population.²⁶

The preferential treatment of the Muslim population did not include only measures of daily work ordered by the district but started at the highest level: orders from the occupation government on the treatment of the whole population. The occupation regimes stuck to severe punishments, martial law, hostage taking, and forced labor when it came to violations of their rules.²⁷ In May 1916 an order was given that in cases of nonobservance of the rules of individuals the whole population fit for military service would be "evacuated" and used for forced labor. The order made only one exception: "The loyal Muslim and Albanian pop-

ulation must be excluded from these punishments."²⁸ Another order implemented the "ruthless" requisition of all goods needed by the army. Only the "loyal" population (Albanians, Muslims, and Turks) was excluded: "They have to be treated considerately and humanely."²⁹

RATIONALE FOR THE OCCUPIER'S BEHAVIOR

When looking for the right personnel in occupied Serbia and Montenegro the army's high command very often picked officers whose curriculum vitae showed a deeper Balkan knowledge. Officers who spoke the respective language (so-called Serbo-Croatian) and who had served in garrisons in Bosnia-Herzegovina or in the sanjak before were preferred. This was obvious from the highest rank in the occupation regime (the governor and his staff officer) to those with the lowest commanding function (the district commanders). The governor of Serbia, Adolf Rhemen zu Barensfeld, had served as the last commanding general in the sanjak. Oskar Gellinek, staff officer in the sanjak from 1902 to 1904, became part of the government's staff in Belgrade in 1916. 30 The k.u.k. officer Gustav von Hubka served in different Austro-Hungarian embassies and consulates in the Balkans before he became chief of staff of the military general government in Montenegro. During his active service he published a lot about his Balkan experience and in 1929 summed up: "And then: six years later [after the end of the Austro-Hungarian presence in the sanjak] the Turkish troops stand as our allies on our side, and the Muslims in the sanjak now being part of Montenegro are not only protected by the Austro-Hungarian occupying forces but live under Austro-Hungarian rule."31

From the first days it was reported from southern Serbia and parts of Montenegro that the Muslim population showed a friendly attitude. Some of the occupying officers wrote that they already personally knew a lot of influential families in the former sanjak region who expressed their interest in collaborating. Especially in those parts of Montenegro and Serbia that had been conquered during the Balkan Wars the Muslim population expressed their feelings of being occupied and suppressed. These declarations were consistent with the opinion of Austro-Hungarian representatives, who believed that these regions in the Balkans inhabited by Muslims had originally belonged to them. They believed that the orthodox population would never become Austrian-friendly.

When analyzing the documents of the Austro-Hungarian army's high command from 1915 on and the reports of the single commands in the

region it becomes obvious that the population of Serbia and Montenegro had been treated in different ways. The difference did not result from their political attitude (whether or not they were so-called Austrophiles: supporters of the Habsburg monarchy) but from their religion and ethnicity. And it often depended on personal experiences of the respective officers. As becomes obvious in many reports, rural regions had been characterized as especially hostile. And many Austro-Hungarian soldiers had become victims of violent attacks. Josef Sauer von Nordendorf, who worked as district commander in the small town of Prijepolje and had an interest in a safe environment for his subordinates, summed up: "Only the Muslims remained quiet. They see us as their protector." He mentioned as the reason for this cooperative behavior not the alliance with the Ottoman Empire or the jihad but that the Muslims were used to following strict rules because of the Qur'an. 32 Roda Roda wrote about his impressions when entering Novi Pazar: "Someone has to watch the Muslims. Hundreds had come running: there was no end of Živio-crying ['long live' crying]."33 These examples show that the different treatment of Muslims did not result only from former experience but from experiences in these localities.

The preferential policy of the military leaders became obvious not only when someone expressed favor but also if the opposite happened. The superiors of a military physician who said publicly at an evening meeting of officers with local upper-class Serbs and Muslims "You Turks are not good" were not amused. When one of the attending Muslim men asked why, the physician replied: "I prefer one male or female Serb instead of the Turks." This misbehavior caused a *Reservatbefehl* (secret order) for all officers working in the government: "The behavior and the consequences of the most thoughtless expression of this military physician need to be sharply rebuked. Such cases are likely to hurt the feelings... of Muslims and to shatter their always proven loyalty. This blatant example of thoughtless chatter is [hereby] brought to general knowledge as well as the necessary protection of Muslim feelings and the need for caution in conversations." ³⁴

For all occupation regimes the support of reliable parts of the population seemed most important for a successful fulfilling of their duties. They not only hoped that people would become loyal but wanted to keep the loyal ones loyal, as a report about restoration of mosques mentioned for Djakova and Ipek: "Even mentioning the question of repairing mosques has had the best impression on the Muslims...besides 80 percent of the population are Muslims. The politically beneficial effect of such an action is beyond doubt." ³⁵

The k.u.k. officers really had the feeling of support by the Muslim population, which became obvious when they tried to gain awards for them. A lot of orders showed that Muslim notables especially from southern Serbia (for example, Mitrovica, Prijepolje, Nova Varoš, and Priboj) had been rewarded because of their "always loyal selfless work in supporting the k.u.k. commands successfully." Many of them got an official "belobende Anerkennung" (laudatory recognition) on behalf of the military governments.³⁷

The alliance with the Ottoman Empire was another reason for preferential treatment. In propaganda works as well as in retrospect many k.u.k. representatives noted that the sultan as the head of all Muslims was allied with Austria-Hungary. But it seems that the on-site experience was much more influential than being brothers in arms. They had to avoid offending their ally and the Muslims in the Balkans. Preference for Muslims should also be seen as promoting the goodwill of their ally. The declaration of the jihad, even in neighboing Bosnia-Herzegovina, played no role in the Austro-Hungarian arguments. ³⁹

MEASURES THAT UNDERLINED THE PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT OF BALKAN MUSLIMS

Most of the time the preference was directly connected with the effort to exploit the countries as efficiently as possible and to engage as few soldiers as possible to administer the occupied territories. It went far beyond indirectly helping or preferring the Muslims. Orders often differed between the Muslim and the Orthodox parts of the population and sometimes ignored some of the Hague Convention's stipulations.

After the Austro-Hungarian army had entered Serbia and Montenegro there was a strong interest in the functioning of municipal governments. Because of the growing lack of their own personnel the occupiers were forced to prefer municipality governments run by locals. But usually former heads were absent or had to be replaced by others because of their hostile attitude. In the sanjak the former Muslim leaders had been largely replaced by Orthodox leaders after the First Balkan War. As a signer of the Hague Convention Austria-Hungary as an occupier had to stick to stipulations such as to retain former municipal heads in office. ⁴⁰ The occupation regimes now had to install persons from the local Orthodox elite or former influential and seemingly cooperative Muslims.

For a long time this question had no official decision, even though Muslim inhabitants sometimes announced emigration to Bosnia-Herzegovina or the Ottoman Empire when they were not engaged in the local government. The first stipulation of the occupation regime was that for the so-called New Montenegro, including parts of the former Sanjak Novipazar (the towns of Plevlje, Bjelopolje, Berane, Ipek, Djakova, und Gusinje), the Austro-Hungarian district commands had to ensure equal treatment of all inhabitants by the local (Orthodox-run) municipal governments, which meant taking care of the Muslim population. If injustices occurred (without doubt the writers thought of the Orthodox as offenders only), the officials should "oppose sharply." In individual cases the local government should be replaced by army members, not by Muslims.

A vivid internal discussion followed this order, including the responsible ministries in Vienna. The army command addressed a letter to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and argued that the stipulated order was "insufficient... to continue the devotion of those who had always been so inclined." The intelligence office of the occupation regime demanded that the former Montenegrin government should be installed in so-called Altmontenegro (Old Montenegro), only from the west to the Tara border; in all other parts the government should be run by Austro-Hungarian representatives. In the end of February 1916 the chief of the general staff, Franz Conrad von Hötzendorf, ended the discussion in regard to the Muslim inhabitants of the sanjak. He ordered that each district where huge parts of the population were Muslim, including Plevlje and Bjelopolje, must engage them in the municipal governments. This solution violated article 43 of the Hague Convention. But this was not the only violation focusing on the Muslim population.

After the invasion the occupation regimes had tried to disarm all inhabitants. An exception was made for southern Serbia only where the army handed over guns to seemingly reliable Muslims to do police work. "They have earned this trust," Roda Roda argued in his book on the Austro-Hungarian campaign in Serbia. 45 The chief of staff of the military government in Belgrade, Hugo Kerchnawe, wrote in his Carnegie report that especially in the "mohammedanische Südkreise" (the Musliminhabited southern parts of Serbia) "our interests ran parallel with their [the Muslims'] interests."

But this did not remain the only "recruitment." It was in any case a violation of the Hague Convention to recruit an occupied population for war efforts, especially as soldiers. ⁴⁷ It concerned particularly the Muslims from Serbia and Montenegro to be incorporated into volunteer organizations of the Habsburg army or into national legions. A report spoke of ten thousand soldiers of Muslim faith who were offered by the notables

of Novipazar, Prijepolje, and Plevlje. At least about three thousand fought in Galicia or were enlisted in k.u.k. Bosniak regiments. Muslims did not volunteer in the k.u.k. army exclusively after the conquer of Serbia and Montenegro. Even in 1914 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the army's high command had corresponded with about twenty Muslims from the sanjak who had already fought in the Balkan War and wished "to be engaged against Serbia." Already in this early stage of World War I the chief of the general staff, Franz Conrad von Hötzendorf, answered: "The incorporation of Muslim volunteers is highly desirable and to be promoted by all means." This attitude did not change after the successful occupation of Serbia and Montenegro.

Exceptions were also made when organizing daily life of the occupying soldiers as well as the population. For example, the occupying forces used thousands of private buildings for accommodation. Because Muslim houses were excluded from requisition, houses of Orthodox Montenegrins and Serbs were used more often. Roda Roda wrote in his published diary: "The soldier's eyes looked demandingly at the doors of the houses. It is warm inside, but on each door a crescent or a star is painted—which means that it is not permitted to walk in." 50

It was one of the main tasks of the occupation regimes to exploit the countries' goods as much as possible, including not only raw materials and foodstuffs but also labor. Muslim women were more or less the only part of the Serbian and Montenegrin population who had been excluded from any forced labor because of religious and cultural convictions ("because the laws of Islam forbid, and therefore no ransom can be demanded").⁵¹

Daily life was almost one hundred percent ruled and directed by the occupier, including sanitary measures and the distribution of food. Forced sanitary measures like public bathing as part of the delousing process, which certainly also offended Orthodox women, excluded Muslim women only. Knowing that the spread of diseases cannot be prevented when excluding huge parts of the population, female physicians had been employed in southern Serbia (Novi Pazar) and Montenegro. The need for female doctors for Muslim women in Bosnia-Herzegovina since 1878 ended up being a reason why the doors of Austro-Hungarian universities were opened for women. In public soup kitchens meals were cooked without fat from pork (for example, during occupation also in Podgorica) with the argument that many Muslims lived there. Most daily food was only available in district stores run by the occupation regime. Each Serb and Montenegrin family received the same amount of each

kind, except that Muslims got alternatives for pork.⁵⁴ To a large extent many of these measures had been usual practice in Bosnia-Herzegovina and for Muslim soldiers in the Austro-Hungarian army.⁵⁵

The extensive use of the occupied lands included the organization of their whole economic life. The chief of staff in Belgrade, Col. Hugo Kerchnawe, described in his manuscript for the Carnegie foundation the economic organization of the southern parts of Serbia. He explained the attitude of the occupation regime: "the time since the Balkan Wars was too short for the Serbian government to change the economic processes there drastically, so if the Austro-Hungarian occupation authorities wanted to be successful they had to take the local customs into account." This meant the traditional Ottoman or Muslim system. The ciftlik system and landlordism had not been discontinued, especially because a lot of high-ranking landowners in the documents returned during the Austro-Hungarian occupation. Local trade also was left without interference. The treasury allowed taxes to be paid in kind. 56 When allowance had been given to run a shop the administration of the tobacco monopoly asked that the district commander in Podgorica respond positively to a request because of the applicant's Muslim background. Only as a side note was the favorable location of the shop mentioned.⁵⁷ The economic policy of taking local customs into account for only one group of the population became public because of traveling scientists from Austria and Hungary. The Austrian economics professor Karl Přibram in 1918 published a book on the economic structure of occupied Serbia. He noted the lax handling of monopolies in southern Serbia, where goods had been given to (Muslim) traders for free trade, usually in exchange for much-needed goods instead of cash. Přibram added that this was "an abandonment of the enforcement of those strict measures as it was usual for the rest of the occupied territory."58

Preference became obvious when it resulted from a decision made by individual district commanders. The commanders had plenty of leeway, for example, in how to use fines that had been earmarked for humanitarian purposes: some supported the building of Catholic churches more often, others mosques, although it was forbidden to favor one single group. Hugo Kerchnawe collected several documents that are today part of the archival collection on his Carnegie work. The k.u.k. *Bauleitung* (construction command) for Djakova and Ipek in August 1918 reported on its work of recent months. The writer started with the Catholic churches reconstructed in the region then switched to the other faith's buildings. The first sentences of the story clearly show the typical style of writing

for humanitarian purposes: "To demonstrate our concessions toward the Muslim population too, we remodeled the mosques from Ipek and Djakova (in addition to some repairs on historically valuable Serb churches). With regard to the behavior of the Muslims from Rozhaj and Korista, who proved to be the most loyal and reliable element, the mosques there, four in number, should be repaired.... Nevertheless the construction work on all three should be done similarly." ⁵⁹

CONCLUSION

A historian should avoid presenting an unbalanced topic and should think in more relative terms. Austria-Hungary as the occupier of seven countries and regions organized all of them a bit differently and treated the population in different ways. Following the orders of the army's high command, Albania and Poland were treated as occupied friend states and nations, although the same severe measures had been implemented. In the Montenegrin and Serbian regime exceptions for culture and religions were also made in favor of Christians. For example, it was forbidden to use forced labor on Sundays, Holy Days, the day of the house or church saint, or Sveti Sava (Saint Sava) day.

The reports also told us about an ongoing discussion among the Serbian and Montenegrin population, including the Muslims, about which group had been preferred most. Orthodox and Muslims saw Catholic Albanians as the profiteers, while Orthodox people saw Muslims as the profiteers. It is interesting that the Austro-Hungarian representatives more or less avoided discussing consequences of their policy (with the single exception of the positive feedback of the Muslim population). The historian can only refer to the written documents. But the question is still open as to whether the Muslims were really loyal and to whom—even when military court files reported no hostile activities of the Muslim population, only of the Orthodox. It was the perceptions of the decision makers and officers operating on site that "made" them loyal. This chapter deals with the perceptions and the policy of the Austro-Hungarian occupation regime and its allies. A corresponding study from the perspective of the Muslim population would be helpful.

The Austro-Hungarian regimes preferred the Muslim population even if this implied a violation of the Hague Convention, but this did not mean an overall exception. During those days, many violent assaults took place on the home front as well as on the frontlines and in the occupation regimes. As in other belligerent countries the Hague regulations were seen much more as a guideline than as a law and most of the time were only called upon when it came to the accusations of hostile countries.

But what about the effects of such a policy? Only a few documents shed light. It was a perpetual tightrope walk: to support the collaborative side on the one hand and not to offend the others too much on the other. The reactions of the majority population, Serbs and Montenegrins, was only discussed when violent resistance had already occurred, though the policy did not change until the end of the occupation. From spring 1916 to autumn 1918 Serbia was declared to be the most successful occupation regime in terms of the requisition of goods. Therefore the officers working in the towns and rural districts of southern Serbia and parts of Montenegro rightly asked: why change a successful and running system? Even when taking into account all the relativizations mentioned above, it was in the end a preference for the Muslim population, even in violation of the Hague Convention.

NOTES

- 1. Roda Roda, Serbisches Tagebuch. Although Roda Roda's Serbian diary was published in 1918, it was written in the end of 1915 and beginning of 1916, when he followed the Austro-Hungarian army in its successful campaign toward Serbia. Because the population and the state to which many of the places mentioned belong often have changed since 1918 I have chosen to use the terms mostly used in the archival sources (for example, Novi Pazar and not Yeni Bazar and Plevlje instead of Taslica).
- 2. Maureen Healy, "In aller 'Freundschaft'?"
- As a contemporary compendium, see Karl Strupp, Das Internationale Landkriegsrecht. Thanks to the Avalon Project of the Lillian Goldman Law Library of the Yale Law School the articles are available online: http://avalon.law.yale.edu /2oth_century/hagueo4.asp.
- Heiko Ahlbrecht, Geschichte der völkerrechtlichen Strafgerichtsbarkeit im 20. Jahrhundert, Juristische Zeitgeschichte, Abt. 1, Allgem. Reihe 2 (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1999), 34–35.
- 5. For an overview of Austro-Hungarian policy in the Balkans and toward the Ottoman Empire, see Horst Haselsteiner, *Bosnien-Hercegovina*.
- 6. For the Austro-Hungarian case, see Robert J. W. Evans, "Language and State Building." For the case of the Ottoman Empire during the nineteenth century as well as examples for movements and attempts based on the idea of nation, see especially the articles by Mehmet Hacısalihoğlu, Hakan Yavuz, Isa Blumi, and Mujeeb R. Khan in M. Hakan Yavuz and Peter Sluglett, eds., War and Diplomacy.
- 7. See Franz-Josef Kos, Die politischen und wirtschaftlichen Interessen Österreich-Ungarns und Deutschlands in Südosteuropa 1912/13.
- 8. On Austro-Hungarian efforts to "tame" nationalism or to create a common

- Bosnian identity, see Robin Okey, *Taming Balkan Nationalism*. See also Imre Ress, "Versuch einer Nationenbildung um die Jahrhundertwende: Benjámin Kállays Konzeption der bosnischen Nation," in *Nation und Nationenbildung in Österreich-Ungarn, 1848–1938: Prinzipien und Methoden*, ed. Endre Kiss and Justin Stagl, Soziologie Forschung und Wissenschaft 21 (Vienna: Lit, 2006), 59–72.
- For an overview on the Austro-Hungarian presence in the sanjak, its duties, and the relationship with the Ottoman Empire, see Tamara Scheer, "Minimale Kosten, absolut kein Blut!"
- 10. L. A. Springer, "In Benighted Novi Bazar."
- 11. N.N., "The Sanjak of Novibazar," 472.
- 12. For examples of national movements in the Balkans, see Mehmet Hacisalihoğlu, "Muslim and Orthodox Resistance against the Berlin Peace Treaty in the Balkans." For the Tanzimat period in the Balkans, see Isa Blumi, *Reinstating the Ottomans*. For the Austro-Hungarian experience in the late nineteenth century, see Scheer, "Minimale Kosten, absolut kein Blut!"
- 13. Scheer, "Minimale Kosten, absolut kein Blut!"; see section 4 of chapter 1.
- 14. The following article exclusively deals with this question: Tamara Scheer, "A Micro-Historical Experience in the Late Ottoman Balkans."
- 15. Situational reports had been written by the sanjak officials twice a month. They provide the situational experience for over thirty years: Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv/Austrian State Archives, Vienna (hereafter ÖStA/HHStA), Konsulatsarchiv, Zivilkommissariat Plevlje, total: 3 boxes. See also Tamara Scheer, "Minimale Kosten, absolut kein Blut!" chapter I.IV.
- 16. Tamara Scheer, "If we are not viable, we have to decay honorably": Habsburg Empire's German Media during the First Balkan War," in William Mulligan, Dominik Geppert, and Andreas Rose, eds., The Wars before the Great War: Conflict and International Politics before the Outbreak of the First World War (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).
- 17. Articles by Aydın Babuna ("The Berlin Treaty, Bosnian Muslims, and Nationalism") and Edin Radušić ("The Ottoman Wrong Horse?") both deal with the case of Bosnia as well as the Bosnian Muslims and nationalism: both in M. Hakan Yavuz and Peter Sluglett, eds., War and Diplomacy.
- Milorad Ekmečić, "Impact of the Balkan Wars on Society in Bosnia and Herzegovina," 262, 268.
- 19. N. J., "Macht geht vor Recht!" 1.
- 20. Pieter Judson, Guardians of the Nation.
- 21. During those times the civil and military highest institutions worked out plans on how to organize a state of emergency in cases of severe crisis and war. The biggest threat was seen in the reaction of the Slavs, especially the Serbs, of the Habsburg Monarchy. Tamara Scheer, *Die Ringstraßenfront*, 35f.
- 22. Tamara Scheer, Zwischen Front und Heimat. Although Austria-Hungary also implemented an occupation regime in Albania, where a huge part of the population was of Muslim faith, because of its organization in a back area and not being a government it is not applicable here.
- 23. Roda, *Serbisches Tagebuch*, 233; as well as Hadtörténelmi Levéltár (hereafter HL), MS 309, Hug Kerchnawe, manuscript for the Carnegie foundation on the

- occupation of Serbia, sent in 1922, chapter VII. c. "Mil. Organisation—Sicherheitsdienst, Organisation der Arbeitskräfte."
- 24. ÖStA/Kriegsarchiv (hereafter KA)/Bildersammlung, Serbien, Kt. 19, No. 2780, Kilophot: Mohammedaner unter den serbischen Gefangenen erhalten die Erlaubnis nach Hause zu gehen, 12.1.1916.
- 25. Scheer, Zwischen Front und Heimat, 90ff.
- Državni Arhiv Crne Gore Cetinje, Fondi Austrisko Vojno Guvernerstvo u Crnoj Gori, fasc. 2, Administration of the Peja district.
- For an overview of violent measures during World War I with special reference to the Austro-Hungarian occupation regimes, see Alan Kramer, *Dynamic of Destruction*.
- 28. ÖStA/KA/Neue Feldakten (NFA), Kt. 1689, MGG Montenegro, Verlautbarung No. 21, 24.5.1916. See also HL, II. 468., MGG Montenegro, Kt. 1, Konv. Közlemények 1-86.
- 29. ÖStA/KA/NFA, Kt. 1691, MGG Montenegro, Konv. k.u.k. Gruppenkommando (Etappenlinienkommando) Oberst Scoffo, 12.12.1915.
- 30. See the attachment "Biographies," based on the analysis of personnel sources in the archives: Scheer, "Minimale Kosten, absolut kein Blut!" For Gellinek, see also Günther Kronenbitter, "Krieg im Frieden," 269.
- 31. Gustav von Hubka, "Österreichisch-ungarische Truppen in der Türkei 1879–1908," 5.
- 32. Josef Sauer von Nordendorf, "Das Schicksal des letzten Militärkommandanten des Sancak Novipazar," 126–31.
- 33. Roda, Serbisches Kriegstagebuch, 227.
- 34. ÖStA/KA/NFA, MGG/S, Kt. 1629, Reservat MGG Befehl No. 31, 25.6.1917.
- 35. HL, MS 309, Hugo Kerchnawe, manuscript for the Carnegie Foundation on the occupation of Serbia, sent in 1922, attached original document on the restoration of churches and mosques, 7.8.1918.
- ÖStA/KA/NFA, MGG S, Kt. 1629, Konv. MGG S Befehle 1916, No. 110, 30.12.1916.
- 37. ÖStA/KA/NFA, MGG S, Kt. 1629, Konv. MGG S Befehle 1917, No. 91, 14.7.1917.
- 38. HL, MS No. 309, Hugo Kerchnawe, manuscript for the Carnegie Foundation on the occupation of Serbia, sent in 1922, chapter VII. c. "Mil. Organisation—Sicherheitsdienst, Organisation der Arbeitskräfte."
- 39. See chapter 41 by Fikret Karčić in this volume.
- 40. Strupp, Das Internationale Landkriegsrecht, 100–102, referring to article no. 43.
- 41. OStA/KA/Armeeoberkommando (hereafter AOK), Kt. 521, B-Gruppe, No. 76/I, AOK an 3. Armeekommando, 11.2.1916.
- ÖStA/KA/AOK, Kt. 521, B-Gruppe, No. 76/I, k.u.k. AOK an Vertreter des Ministerium des Äußern, 11.2.1916.
- 43. OStA/KA/AOK, Kt. 521, B-Gruppe, No. 76/I, Anmerkung der Nachrichtenabteilung, 1916.
- 44. Franz Conrad von Hötzendorf became chief of the general staff in 1906, but he started his career as a young lieutenant in the sanjak in 1879:
- 45. Roda, Serbisches Tagebuch, 233.
- 46. Hugo Kerchnawe, "Die k.u.k. Militärverwaltung in Serbien," 93.
- 47. Strupp, Das Internationale Landkriegsrecht, 111, referring to article no. 52.

- HL, Ms, Nr. 309, Hugo Kerchnawe, manuscript for the Carnegie Foundation on the occupation of Serbia, sent in 1922, chapter VII. c. "Mil. Organisation— Sicherheitsdienst, Organisation der Arbeitskräfte."
- 49. ÖStA/HHStA/Politische Abteilung (hereafter PA) I, Kt. 820, Krieg 1914–15, Fasz. d "Freiwillige Mohammedaner aus dem Sandschak zu unserer Südarmee eingereiht Okt. 14–Jänner 1915," including telegrams and letters between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the army's high command, October/November 1914.
- 50. Roda, Serbisches Tagebuch, 236.
- 51. ÖStA/KA/NFA, Kt. 1676, MGG Serbien, 1916/18, Konv. Kreiskdo in Valjevo, orders, 1916. See also Tamara Scheer, *Zwischen Front und Heimat*, 192f.
- 52. Julius Roksandic, Sanitäre Wacht an der Pforte des Orients und Occidents: Kriegs-Sanitäres aus dem k.u.k. Militärgeneralgouvernement in Serbien (Belgrade, 1918), 35. Dr. Roksandic was a military physician who worked for the sanitary department of the military government in Serbia. See also Scheer, Zwischen Front und Heimat, 192; and idem, "Austro-Hungarian Occupation Regimes in the Balkans."
- 53. Martina Gamper, "Ärztinnen für Arbeiterinnen," 72.
- Karl Weber, Bosnien, Montenegro und Albanien im Kriege, 27. Karl Weber was a Swiss writer who got an official travel permit.
- 55. For a detailed overview of the duties and measures of the occupation regime in Bosnia-Herzegovina, see Karl Gabriel, *Der Aufbau der Verwaltung in Bosnien-Herzegowina 1878 unter FZM Wilhelm Herzog von Württemberg und dessen Biographie*.
- 56. HL, manuscripts, No. 309, Hugo Kerchnawe, manuscript for the Carnegie Foundation on the occupation of Serbia, sent in 1922.
- 57. ÖStA/KA/NFA, MGG Montenegro, Kt. 1724, letter of the Tabakmonopol to the district commando of Podgorica, 13.2.1917.
- Karl Přibram, Die wirtschaftliche Verwaltung des serbischen Okkupationsgebietes, 28–29.
- HL, MS 309, Hugo Kerchnawe, manuscript for the Carnegie Foundation on the occupation of Serbia, sent in 1922, attached original document on the restoration of churches and mosques, 7.8.1918.
- 60. See Scheer, Zwischen Front und Heimat.

Albania

The Struggle for Identity on the Eve of World War I

Olsi Jazexhi

In the summer of 1908, when the Young Turks had forced Abdülhamid II to restore the constitution in Istanbul, a bizarre thing took place in the kaza of Tirana (Tiranë) in the vilayet of İşkodra (Shkodër/Shkodra). An obscure group of nationalist Albanians led by Refik Bey Toptani walked into the center of the town, summoned the schoolteachers of the local *rüşdiyes* (schools for adolescents) and madrasas, handed them a number of Albanian-language primers, and demanded that from now on the children were to read from these books. The primers, which were written in the Albanian vernacular using the Latin alphabet, were claimed to be Albanian books.

Refik Bey Toptani was an "Albanian" and at the same time an Ottoman bey. He had received a book on the history of Albania from the consulate of Austria-Hungary in Shkodra in 1898. Since then (or probably much earlier) he had come in contact with Albanian propaganda that taught Albanian speakers about the heroic past of their nation. The book that he received in 1898 was part of this propaganda and the first of its kind. It was written by Ludwig (Lajos) Thallóczy, an Austro-Hungarian politician and historian. In a letter sent to Benjamin von Kállay, the Habsburg administrator of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1897, Thallóczy explained to his superiors that his intention in writing the first history of Albania was to foster nationalism among the Albanians.¹

Refik was not a lonely nationalist in Tirana in 1908. His brother, Murat Toptani (who had married the daughter of Naim Frashëri, one of the most influential poets of Albanian nationalism, in Istanbul), was a nationalist too. After the proclamation of the *Hürriyet* in Istanbul, Murat

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rushed to urge the muted nationalist Albanians of Tirana to proclaim their identity and establish an Albanian school, while he opened his house to the Bashkimi Club.²

Refik and Murat were two Muslim beys from Tirana. Like many other beys of their time, they were affected by the ideas of European modernity and nationalism. They had read European publications about the origin of the Albanians, which had changed the way in which they perceived themselves. Like many other rich Albanian-Ottomans of their time they were "enlightened" with ideas of Albanian nationalism, which they studied in Austria-Hungary.³ The beys were able to break free from the official Abdülhamidian ideology of Islamism in part because of their privileged economic and political status and affluence in the vilayets. Most of the beys of the Albanian vilayets of the Ottoman Empire did not care much about the Ottoman laws but had themselves surrounded by brigands and outlaws. 4 Since the middle of the nineteenth century an increasing number of them had been educated in the West or had visited it and learned French. Influenced by European culture and ideas, they had began to change their ideas about themselves and changed their dress from alla turca to alla franca. They imagined themselves not in religious terms, as Turks (which meant Muslims), but in modern European terms, as Albanians.

Prior to 1908 the majority of the people in the Albanian vilayets did not perceive themselves as the beys did. According to Hafiz Ibrahim Dalliu, a nationalist *hoca* (teacher) who lived in Tirana during these times: "before the proclamation of freedom in Turkey the people of Tirana were of three kinds: one type was made up of those members of the absolutist government of [Sultan] Abdülhamid II. Then there were the great majority, who were—ignorant—indifferent. Then there were the few who wanted to change the form of the government and endeavored to spread the national ideal. These individuals were known as Albanians."

Dalliu shows that before 1908 the "Albanians" were a minority in Tirana: he knew only thirty such people. The rest imagined themselves in religious terms, as Muslims or Turks and Giaours or Christians. The same situation is reported even from the sanjak of Durrës (Dirac). Mustafa Kruja reveals that before 1912 he knew only ten people in the city who would describe themselves as "Albanians." According to him, Muslims considered themselves Turks, while the Orthodox Christians believed that "only Hellenism could save them." Kruja notes that the Muslims could not feel "the voice of their blood" and saw only "Turks and Giaours" around them. §

Eqrem Bey Vlora (the nephew of Ismail Kemal Bey, who declared the independence of Albania in 1912) writes:

The worldview of the majority of Albanians from 1900 to 1906 was truly regrettable. Nobody felt they belonged to one nation: in all places where our people lived, they were sharply divided into two camps. Three-fourths of the population, to the question of who they were, responded "I am a Turk elhamdulilah" [Praise be to Allah, I am a Turk]...due to their religious adherence. The other quarter, the Orthodox and sometimes even the Catholics, were called Giaours.

The idea that the people living in the vilayet of İşkodra were Turks and Christians can be found in many songs produced in Ottoman Albania in these times. In a song composed in 1908 that celebrates the victory of the Young Turks over the sultan, we read of "Turks" and "Christians" who celebrate the victory of Tyrqënija (Turkdom) over the *murtat* (traitors) of the *miletin e Turqënis* (Turkish nation). ¹⁰ Here is one text:

Të gjithë populli deri në Skënderije¹¹ Kët ferman lusim me za Jashasyn vrrasin Turkiye Qi na dhe liri në dynja Të diellen nade daulla ra Krisi pushka edhe topi Turq e të kështenë vllazën janë ba Për shyqyr qi na pështoj Zoti

All the people up to Skënderije
For this edict we pray with one voice
We cheer long live Turkey
That liberated us in this world
Sunday night the drum boomed
Rifles and cannons were shot
Turks and Christians become brothers
Praise the Lord who saved us all. 12

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the subjects of the Ottoman Empire witnessed enormous changes in the ways in which they thought of themselves. The intrusion of the Great Powers of Europe in

the domains of the Ottoman Empire and the creation of a number of nation-states in the Balkans initiated a process that transformed the identities of Christians throughout the empire: from members of the Ottoman millets into Greeks, Serbs, Bulgarians, and so forth. During the first centuries of Ottoman rule, local Christians and Muslims classified themselves according to their religious millets or according to their regions, tribes, guilds, cities, or towns. But the Greek revolution (which was the first of the successful separatist revolutions within the empire) and the subsequent creation of the Greek state began a process that changed the way in which most of the peasant population of the Balkans thought of themselves. The early modern Balkan society, which was politically unified by the Ottoman state and culturally homogenized by the Orthodox Church and Islam after the appearance of nationalism, was transformed beyond recognition. The nationalism, which started in Greece, was replicated everywhere in the Balkans, where peasants became Greeks, Serbs, Bulgarians, Romanians, and finally Albanians. 13

The birth of Albanian nationalism had four important landmarks that have been identified by Nathalie Clayer. The first was in 1860, when the first Albanian newspaper, *Pelasgos*, was published in Greece by Anastas Byku. The second was in 1878, when the Eastern Crisis began and a second wave of newspapers propagating Albanianism appeared. The third was in 1896–97, when the Ottoman Empire was engulfed in a difficult political and military crisis that led to an increase in the number of Albanian periodicals. The fourth was the Young Turk revolution of 1908, when Albanianism became a challenging ideology within the Ottoman Empire.

The most important of these events was the Eastern Crisis, which ended with the defeat of the Ottoman armies by Russia, the invasion of many Albanian-inhabited territories by the Balkan Orthodox Christian states, and the Congress of Berlin. The calculations that the Great Powers of Europe (Austro-Hungary and Italy in particular) started to make after the Congress to determine the future of the peninsula after the removal of the Ottomans had long-term consequences for Muslim and Christian Albanian speakers of the vilayets. After the Congress of Berlin the Austro-Hungarian, Italian, and sometimes even Ottoman officials started to engineer different Albanian identities in response to the new international power relations established after the crisis. During the proceedings of the Berlin Congress, Bismarck famously claimed to a delegation of nationalist Albanians that Albania was nothing more than a geographical expression. But the post-Berlin Balkans led to the need to

create European Albanians out of these Muslim Ottoman people and thus make them worthy of existence in Europe. As M. Hakan Yavuz has noted, the new international system established after the Congress of Berlin required ethnic homogenization, while the nation-state became the new founding principle of this system: "the target of the European diplomacy in the nineteenth century was to eliminate this 'alien substance': Ottoman Muslims." ¹⁵ In other words, Albanian nationalism was in a way a European and a Muslim response to the new political order in the Balkans.

The ouster of Sultan Abdülhamid II and the events that followed until the end of World War I were an extension of those geopolitical changes that impacted the Balkans after the Congress of Berlin. These political and military upheavals, which culminated with the final removal of the Ottomans from the western Balkans after World War I, created situations of life and death for millions of Muslims in the Rumelian vilayets. During these years millions of Muslims lost their Ottoman protection, faced death through violence or starvation, and were forced to leave their homes and find new solutions to ensure their existence. One of the solutions that some intellectual Albanians sought to adapt was nationalism. After the Congress of Berlin, when many Albanian intellectuals had lost their hopes for the survival of the empire, they started to urge their Albanian compatriots to shift their loyalties from the Ottoman Empire to an independent imagined Albania, which the nationalist literature depicted as being ancient, being European, and having no connection to the Turks. 16 The nationalist Albanians had to face a major obstacle in these times, however: the vast majority of the peasants and urbanites of the Albanian-speaking vilayets did not identify themselves as Albanians and could not grasp the modern romanticist message of nationalism.

The reason why Albanians were so few in the town of Tirana in 1908 was related to its Ottoman context. Miroslav Hroch has noted that an essential truth that accompanies the spread of national identity during its phase "B" of development is that national identity is an idea that must be propagated in an environment that until that time recognized several distinct identities. Ethnic identity is always stronger when supported by ecclesiastical organizations, parliaments, and armies. But Tirana, like many other cities in the Albanian-inhabited Ottoman vilayets of these times, did not have the institutions to support a linguistic identity over the imperial-religious one.

Even though the majority of people in Tirana were Albanian speakers, the town had two major agents of identity transmission: Islam (the

dominant religion of the town) and its Ottoman institutions. At the beginning of the twentieth century Tirana, which was surrounded by 103 villages, contained 2,200 houses. Its population, which was overwhelmingly Sunni Muslim, was estimated to range between 15,000 and 20,000. 18 The town had nineteen mosques and twelve teges (tekkes), primarily of the Halveti and Rifa'i Sufi orders. 19 Apart from the Sunnis a handful of Bektashi households, over one hundred Orthodox families, and five or six Catholic families lived there. 20 According to a report by the Austro-Hungarian consul of Durrës, in 1898 the town had twenty-three Catholic, six hundred Orthodox, and six hundred Egyptian (Coptic) inhabitants. The rest were all Muslims, 21 who were loyal to the empire and the sultan.²² The cultural and religious life of Tirana was dominated by the madrasa, which was under the direction of three *müderris* (teachers). The town was also a center to a redif battalion. As of 1908 it had three boys' and five girls' primary schools, a rüşdiye for Muslims, and two Orthodox schools: one for girls and one for boys.²³ The Muslims were getting their religious education in the *mektebs* (primary schools) and the madrasas, while those who wanted a more secular education attended the rüşdiye.24

Tirana was divided between two social groups. On one side stood the ulema and the hocas, state officials and the majority of the people who were loyal to the state and supported the *mbret* (sultan) and the *dovlet* (the state). On the other were the beys (chieftains or landowners), who welded widespread authority, power, and wealth. The people were accustomed to define themselves as they did elsewhere in the Ottoman Balkans in terms of religion, locality, occupation, and social status and certainly not in terms of linguistic nationalism. The ethnic identity of the people was not supported by any of these institutions. Only foreign European councils and the Young Turk and Albanian émigré newspapers that were being printed outside of the vilayets were telling people that they were Albanians.²⁵

The Albanian identity proclaimed in Tirana in 1908 was forced to make its way against all these other identities. The only group of people who had a more secular and Westernized view of life were the beys. Thanks to the modern education that many of them received in foreign countries they were the first among the Muslims to be influenced by Albanianism.²⁶ The intellectuals were another group who were influenced by Albanianism at an early stage. One of these early Ottoman-educated nationalists, Mustafa Kruja, shows that those who became "Albanians" prior to 1912 were intellectuals. He notes that provinces devoid of

intellectuals (such as the kaza of Shijak) had no "Albanians." The connections of nationalism, intellectual activity, and exposure to ideas coming from the West seem not to have been confined to Tirana or even to Ottoman Albania. Paschalis Kitromilides observed the same processes existing even in Anatolia, where Hellenization was linked to the graduates of the University of Athens. Teachers trained locally in traditional Orthodox seminaries were much slower in advancing Hellenism and national identity. Each of the University of Athens.

The public proclamation of Albanianism in Tirana of 1908 was confronted by Ottomanism, a rival nationalism that perceived Muslim Albanians as its target. This was the official ideology that the Young Turks adapted after the revolution. After ousting the sultan the Young Turks centralized power and revoked many freedoms that people had enjoyed after the revolution. In the Albanian vilayets they pushed members of their party, the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), the ulema, village teachers (mu'alims), traders, and everyday Muslim Albanian speakers to identify themselves as Ottomans. The vision that the Young Turks had for their Ottoman subjects is perhaps best summarized by Ziya Gökalp, who proclaimed in 1909 that the future of Ottoman lands will be as "free and progressive as America of the East, where Turks, Arabs and Greeks would call themselves Ottoman and then Turk, or Arab or Greek."29 This view was shared even by many Albanian-speaking Young Turks, such as Resneli Ahmet Niyazi, the hero of the revolution that launched the mutiny against Abdülhamid II in 1908. He believed that their movement would bring justice and absolute equality to the Turks, Albanians, Bulgarians, Greeks, Vlaches, and Serbs.³⁰

The Turkification policies of the Young Turks fostered the animosity of many nationalist Albanians, who had been supportive before the revolution and fought together against the absolutist rule of the sultan. The Ottomanist policies that the Young Turks implemented in Istanbul had repercussions even in Tirana and the Albanian-speaking vilayets. The Young Turks intended not only to Ottomanize the Albanians but to Turkify them too. Hafiz Ali Korça, a nationalist hoca from Korça who was a close friend of Talat Paşa, one of the main leaders of the CUP, explains how a certain Nazim Bey expressed himself in front of Talat Paşa and himself regarding the way in which the Young Turks perceived the Albanian question: "You [Albanians] are taking these [Latin letters]... with the hidden agenda of creating one Albania. But you must know that either we will unite all the Ottomans and make them Turks, as the French endeavored with the Britons, Frisians, and others by turning them

into Frenchmen, or otherwise we will abandon Rumelia and unite all in Anarolia."³¹

As Hafiz Ibrahim Dalliu shows, when the nationalist Albanians appeared in Tirana to proclaim their ideology in 1908 the Young Turks appeared there too. They created their own branch of the İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti (CUP). Their members were mostly hocas, government officials, merchants, and teachers. Unlike the common people, who had no idea of what the "Albanians" were, the *ittihadcis* knew. They were described as agents of Austro-Hungary and enemies of Islam who wanted to destroy the Devlet (Dovlet).

The years 1908 to 1912 were times of decisive fighting between the secular nationalist Albanians, who described themselves as Albanians or Shqiptars,³² the Albanian-speaking Osmanlıs (Turks), and the bulk of the Muslim population, who perceived themselves as Osmanlıs, and most Orthodox Christians, who perceived themselves as Greeks. The loyalist Albanians who controlled the Ottoman institutions of the Albanian vilayets manipulated the religious feelings of the Muslims by organizing many protests against the separatist Albanians throughout the major cities of the vilayets of Manastır (Monastir), Kosova (Kosovo), Yanina (Yannina), and Shkodra. They feared the departure of the Ottomans and thus viewed the nationalist Albanians as dangerous traitors who worked against the Din and Devlet. From 1910 to 191, the loyalists published two newspapers in the Ottoman language: the Doğrusöz (Right Word), and later Yürek (Heart). To face the growing Albanian nationalist propaganda and publications they even published a number of Ottoman-written Albanian-language spelling books and primers for children, teaching them that they were Osmanlıs.

The Young Turk propaganda was successful in fostering an Islamic-Ottoman identity among the Albanians. In the vilayets of Shkodra and Kosova the vast majority of the people supported the "Osmanlıs" against the "Albanians." Hafiz Ibrahim Dalliu reports that as soon as Albanianism was proclaimed in Tirana the nationalists were attacked not only by the state and the army but by the majority of Tirana's inhabitants as well. The Young Turks organized gangs of children in the streets to assail people calling themselves "Albanian" (*shqiptar*), who were swearing "Ngordhi shqipja, jahu!" (The Albanian language is dead, hurray!). They accused the nationalists of wanting to make the call to prayer (*ezan*) in Albanian instead of Arabic and of praying behind priests. They sent agitators into the villages around Tirana asking the *katunarët* (peasants) to descend upon the town and kill the *kaurrët shqiptarë* (Albanian infidels).

The "Albanian" was a novel entity for these peasants, as can be seen in Dalliu's account of their exchange with Refik Bey Toptani, leader of the Albanianists:

(Katunarët) İttihad has called us to come and protect freedom, keeping the oath we've made.

Refik replied: But am I not the one who asked you for your oath to protect freedom?

(Katunarët) But, sir, we are told, you have become an Albanian.

Refik replied: But what are you, Bulgarians? You must understand that you are mistaken.³³

The secular ideas of Albanian nationalism that called on the people to identify themselves in ethnic terms and with an imagined Albania, write the language in Latin alphabet, and see themselves as detached from Muslim Turks were hated by religious Muslims. For the hocas, the nationalists were heretics. They advised the people of Tirana to reject them and not to learn Albanian: "Those who learn Albanian will become infidels [giaours] and abandon the dovlet [state]." They proclaimed: "The Albanian language will make us Giaours, make people marry their own sisters, destroy mosques and tekkes, suspend the Qur'an, fasting, and cleanliness." The revulsion displayed against the Albanians was so pronounced that the mufti of Tirana ended up issuing a fatwa, requesting that nobody speak with the "Albanians" because they have been taught by shaytan (the devil).34 The nationalists were accused of being on the payroll of the Austrians and being utterly dissolute. In a letter sent to the nationalist Lef Nosi on January 1909 from the city of Durrës we read the following description of the conflict: "Muslims do not even want to hear the words 'Albanian' or 'Albanian language'; Young Turkism is inflaming them with fanaticism. They deem all Albanian clubs that exist nowadays to be filled with vagabonds and ungrateful people who want to split them from the Osmanlıs who gave those freedoms. If Albanians are to be good people why don't they write their language with the Turkish and not Latin alphabet?"35

Mustafa Kruja describes the situation:

The worst infidel, the most vicious enemy of all [for the Muslims], was the Albanian Muslim who loved the Albanian language and Albania. He had sold his body and soul to Austria and Italy. But he was so cursed that even the earth will not keep him inside. He

will become a ghost. He is an infidel in both faith and deed. If he was not to be afraid, he was going to replace even his fez and *qeleshe* [a type of felt cap] with a Western hat. He was going to remove the veil from his wife and walk with her hand in hand in the city streets. This is the Albanian! This is a *giaour* that has been branded on his back like a horse for very little money by the Austrians. This is the Albanian traitor to our father the sultan; he has no faith or honor. If someone were to allow him, he would marry even his own sister!³⁶

Miroslav Hroch has argued that not all European national movements had full independence from their sovereign empire as part of their political plan. Many national movements ended up with a state of their own. This was not the fruit of a deliberate and long-term effort on the part of the national leaders, however, but a consequence of external events. The disintegration of three multiethnic empires at the end of World War I opened the way to national independence and allowed the creation of a number of nations and states that we see now.³⁷ Hroch's observation fits very well into our Albanian example. The Albanian national movement that developed inside and outside the Ottoman Empire during the last years of the empire's existence was a very weak movement that faced many challenges. The examples above indicate how Muslim Albanians rejected the separatist ideas of the nationalists and the designs that some European powers had for them. The situation was somehow dissimilar with Christian Albanian speakers. While they disliked the secular nationalists who propagated Albania, they adored Greece and perceived themselves as Greek Christians (Epirotes).

Albanian nationalism would probably have vanished and Albania would never have been turned into a state if the First Balkan War of 1912–13 had not led to the final defeat of the Ottoman armies and the invasion of the Albanian vilayets by the Balkan Alliance of Serbia, Greece, Montenegro, and Bulgaria. The first Albanian state was created because of this war. The British foreign secretary Sir Edward Grey, who feared a general European war over the future of Albania, shaired a conference in London with the ambassadors of Germany, Austria, Russia, France, and Italy, which agreed to create an Albanian state. When Albania was created, however, few Albanian speakers welcomed this or showed readiness to transfer their allegiances to the new state. Kristo Floqi, a nationalist Christian, was surprised by the skepticism of the people toward Albania after its creation. In 1913 he was asking "where are the Albanians

that were eagerly expecting this bright day?" He later concluded: "Now that...Albania is made...we have to make the Albanians." In such a situation, when not only the nation but even the state was not consolidated, the nationalists had to push their movement from Hroch's "phase B" (an era of patriotic agitation and imagination) into "phase C," when nationalism rises into a mass movement, the national cause has to be adopted by the widest section of the society, and the formation of the nation becomes a political demand.⁴⁰

The official narrative of Albanian nationalism pretends that the state of Albania was formed on November 28, 1912, when the Albanians proclaimed their independence from the Ottoman Empire under the leadership of the Ottoman parliamentarian, Ismail Qemali. The state of Albania was not created in 1912, however, and the majority of its people did not want it. When the Ottoman army was defeated by the Balkan Alliance, the Austro-Hungarians and Italians, who were concerned by the expansion of Serbia and Greece in the Balkans, undertook a number of initiatives for the creation of an Albanian state. They wanted to create a state in the Adriatic as a means of stopping the Serbs and the Greeks from acquiring substantial access to the land and sea. The London Conference, which somewhat replicated the Congress of Berlin in curtailing the gains of the Orthodox Christians, recognized the concerns of Austro-Hungary and Italy and entrusted them to be the main sponsors of the Albanian project. 41 The conference approved the organization and the status of Albania in the summer of 1913. Albania was declared to be an independent state under the guarantee of the Great Powers. Austro-Hungary and Italy were trusted to become its patrons.

In order to turn Albania into a reality, in October 1913 the London Conference created an official body, the International Committee of Control (ICC), which oversaw the transition in Albania. The ICC created the first constitution of Albania, known as the Organic Statute for Albania. After the Great Powers selected a German prince, Prince William zu Wied, as the future ruler of the country, the ICC took care to create the conditions for his installation. In the Organic Statute for Albania the ICC even "produced" the first official definition of the Albanians. In its third chapter entitled "The People," the Albanians are defined as follows: "Albanian citizens are all those people who were born or lived in Albania before 28 November and were Ottoman citizens under the Ottoman government." The official language of Albania was to be Albanian, and the state had no official religion. ⁴²

The state, which Prince zu Wied directed from Durrës between March 7 and September 3, 1914, did not last long. From its very beginning

it was challenged by the beys and paşas, Muslims and Christians, of Albania. The Muslims hated the Protestant Wied and called him the Giaour (infidel) prince. The Orthodox Christians suspected the members of his government of being Masons and Protestants who intended to destroy Orthodoxy. Wied tried to unite an array of hostile Albanian, Vlach, and Greek clans (divided into three religions and many regions, loyalties, sects, and tribes) but failed. The Orthodox Christians in the south revolted against his state: they proclaimed autonomy from Durrës and later joined Greece. The Sunnis, whom Harry Lamb (the British consul in Durrës) described as Hamidian fanatics, gave the major blow to the London-created-Albanian state. They revolted against the "Giaour" prince in May 1914. One of the excuses for their rebellion was Wied's arrest of Esat Paşa Toptani, the Ottoman general who had defended Shkodra from Montenegrins in 1913 and was serving as interior minister. The Sunni Muslims of central Albania, who had rested high hopes on him, rebelled militarily and managed to defeat the nationalist troops and foreign European mercenaries of Durrës within a few months. On September 5, 1914, after they had forced the Prince zu Wied to flee, some two thousand Muslim insurgents led by muftis and hocas, who called themselves "Osmanlıs," liberated Durrës, the capital of Albania. They hoisted the Ottoman flag over Wied's palace and legislated the reunion of the Albanian vilayet with the Ottoman Empire. 43

The conflict of the Albanian-speaking Muslims and Christians with nationalist Albanians was religious. The Sunni Muslims perceived their future within the Ottoman state, while the Orthodox Christians perceived Greece as their mother country. Both communities had their spiritual centers in Istanbul. But the nationalists and their Italian and Austro-Hungarian sponsors wanted to separate them from their ecumenical centers. They were interested in breaking the millet divisions of the Albanian tribes and creating a modern secular nation. The majority of Muslims and Christians, however, rejected these European designs. The Orthodox Christians accused those Christians who opted for an Albanian identity of becoming Muslims or Turks. 44 For the Muslims, the nationalists were simply traitors and infidels.

The collapse of the Ottoman power in Albania and the nationalists' attempts to separate from Istanbul generated conflicts even over the question of the liturgy among the Muslims and Christians. The Orthodox Christians had always written their liturgy in Greek. When Petro Nini Luarasi (a nationalist priest from the village of Luarasi) started preaching his sermons in the Albanian vernacular in 1911, he was accused of being a Freemason and Protestant by the metropolitan of Kostur and later killed

by the Patriarchalists.⁴⁵ The very same fate awaited Papa Kristo Negovani, who also tried to employ Albanian-language liturgies.⁴⁶ Like the Muslims, Orthodox Albanian speakers, who transformed themselves into nationalists, were cursed by their millets. The Orthodox Grecomans believed that a nationalist:

s'është i krishterë Kush largohet nga Greqia. S'beson Krishtin e prish fenë Kush mëson gjuhën e tija.

[He] is not a Christian Who abandons Greece Does not believe in Christ and has no faith He who learns his language.⁴⁷

The Muslims had the same perception of the secular Albanians. In his poem "Conversation of an Albanian, a Grecoman, and a Rebel," Sali Butka (Be Butkës) described an imaginary discussion between himself and an Osmanlı. The Osmanlı accuses the Albanian as follows:

Juve besën e ndërroni Din' e iman mohoni Jemi Shqiptarë thoni Turqinë nuk e doni.

You are religious renegades You reject belief and faith You say we are Albanians And for Turkey you have no love.

The Albanian responds:

Po kombet janë të ndarë S janë një fis e një farë Si greqija me Bullgarë Dhe Tyrku me Shqiptarë Është me të drejtë të themi Tyrkun pejgamber se kemi Neve Myslimanë jemi Pejgamber Arap e kemi

But nations are divided
They are not one family or clan
Like Greece with the Bulgarians
Even the Turk with the Albanians
It is right that we declare
The Turk is not our prophet
Even we are Muslims
Our prophet is an Arab.

The destruction of the first Albanian state by the Osmanlı and Grecoman Albanians coincided with the outbreak of World War I in Europe. Once the war started the European powers, who had created Albania to preserve peace and the balance of power in Europe, ⁴⁹ abandoned their Albanian experiment and commitment. Nevertheless, Albania was not left out of the war. It was occupied by a number of European armies. The Greeks invaded the south in October 1914, the Italians seized Vlora in the same month, and Montenegrins captured Shkodra in June 1915. As World War I went on the Italians expanded their zone of occupation by capturing a number of Albanian towns, such as Leskovik, Skrapar, and Kolonja, which had previously been occupied by Greece. ⁵⁰

The most significant incursion into Albania was carried out by Austro-Hungary. It entered Albania in January 1916, pushing the Serbian and Montenegrin forces out of the country. Their allies the Bulgarians invaded the east, while Korça in the southeast was taken over by the French in October 1916. Korça was invaded by Gen. Maurice Sarrail, who led a battalion into the city in order to remove the forces of King Constantine, who had joined the pro-German bloc. As the war intensified, the Great Powers, which had once taken such interest in the creation of Albania, abandoned their commitments to the Albanian question. According to the Secret Pact of London, which was signed in London on April 26, 1915, by the Kingdom of Italy, Great Britain, France, and Russia, Albania was to be partitioned by Italy, Greece, and Serbia. 51

But Albanian nationalism was supported in a localized fashion by some of the invading powers. The most important of these was Austro-Hungary, which held more than two-thirds of Albania from 1916 to 1918 and (as noted) had taken a special interest in fostering Albanian nationalism since the Congress of Berlin. In 1897 the Austro-Hungarians, who foresaw the removal of the Ottomans from the Balkans, initiated a special project known as the "Albanian Action," through which they planned to create an Albanian identity different from that of the other Ottoman Muslim populations. When the Austro-Hungarians captured Albania in

1916 they depicted the Dual Monarchy as the defender of the Albanian nation, which wanted to introduce enlightened rule and thereby respect Albania's national character and traditions.⁵³ The Austro-Hungarians managed to extend their rule over the cities of Shkodra, Tirana, Elbasan, Kavaja, Berat, and Fier. The center of their military administration was in the city of Shkodra,⁵⁴ which had a large loyal Catholic population. Their invasion was supported by many nationalist Albanians, who perceived the occupiers as guardians of their nation. Austro-Hungary created an Albanian administration for the occupied territories, set up directorates for finance, education, and justice, and administered a census.⁵⁵ For the first time since the separation of the country from the Ottoman Empire, the Austro-Hungarians tried to create a progressive foundation for the governmental administration. They opened dozens of schools throughout the country to teach Albanians their language as well as German and turned Albania into an autonomous province, closely following the model of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The Austro-Hungarians pursued the policies of the nationalists and Wied. By closing the schools of the Muslim and Orthodox Christian millets they made primary education compulsory and continued policies of Albanianization. The Albanian language, written with Latin characters, was enforced as the official language.⁵⁶ If the Austrians had supported the Albanian project in an indirect way during the days of the Ottoman Empire and the reign of Wied, now they worked tirelessly to aid the nationalists in expounding their secular identity. In the semiofficial journal Posta e Shqypniës (published in Shkodra by the Franciscans and sponsored by the Austrians) we read that by 1916 the general directorate of education had established some 134 schools in both northern and southern Albania, whose goal was described "to civilize the nation." The Austro-Hungarians established the first literary commission for the Albanian language, which worked on creating a standard and a unified language for Albania, based on the Elbasan dialect.⁵⁸ Even though their rule was short-lived, the Austro-Hungarians managed to establish the first bona fide foundations of Albanian nationalism, which would have long-term impact for the future of the country.

The Albanian project received support to some extent even from the French and the Italians. When the French occupied Korça in 1916 they declared the city an independent republic, set up an Albanian administration, adopted Albanian as its official language, and supported, for some time, nationalist Albanians against the Grecoman Christians.⁵⁹ In April 1917 they established a commission to research education and

thereafter opened six schools in the city, where children were educated in Albanian and French.

The Italians supported a rendering of Albanianism as well. When the Austrian troops retreated from Albania in 1918, the Italians took over most of their abandoned territories, thereby turning themselves into masters of Albania. In the regions that they ruled from 1915 to 1919 they opened some forty-four schools and trained a number of Albanian teachers inside the country as well as in the College of San Demetro di Corona in Italy. Even though the Italians had signed the Secret Pact of London on April 26, 1915, they declared the independence of Albania under the protection of Italy on June 3, 1917. Their declaration came as a response to a similar declaration that the Austro-Hungarians had made on January 23, 1917.⁶⁰ In the Italian proclamation made by General Ferrero (the Italian commander in Albania) the Albanians were depicted as an ancient and noble people with many traditions and memories connected to the Roman and Venetian civilizations. Ferrero stated that the help that Italy was offering to the country through its independence aimed to transform Albania "from a geographical name devoid of many particulars into one sentiment, one nation, full of power and self-glory."61 By the time World War I drew to a close the Italians had ended up in control of most of Albania. Serbia was occupying its northern borders, while Shkodra was taken from Montenegro on November 8, 1918, by an international force of Italians, French, and British troops under the command of General Philips.

When World War I came to an end the Italians, who were in control of much of the country, formed a puppet government, which was to serve their interests. This government was based in Durrës and was sent to the Paris Peace Conference, to represent Albania and make sure to preserve it as an Italian protectorate. This government, however, as well as other Albanian parties that were present in Paris, did not manage to persuade the Great Powers about the future of Albania. The Great Powers agreed in general that Albania was to remain an Italian mandate, with Italy obtaining full control over Vlora and its hinterland as well as the strategic island of Saseno. The remainder of Albania was to be under the guarantee and supreme control of the League of Nations, which was to act as a guardian for its sovereignty.⁶² The Great Powers did not know what to do with Albania, so no final conclusion had been reached over its future when the Paris Peace Conference came to an end on January 21, 1920. The only Muslim majority country of Europe was officially forgotten.

The fate of Albania was decided after the Peace Conference. The British, who thought that Albania possessed considerable oil fields, began to pressure many Albanian notables to rise up against the Italians and their Durrës government and request the nationalists to organize a congress aimed at supplanting it.⁶³ The acting British consul in Albania, Morton Eden, was able to convince the Albanians that their interests were not appropriately represented at the Paris Conference and that they had to now take action to save their independence. ⁶⁴ He roamed from Berat to Gjirokastra in December 1919, convincing Albanian notables that the British government wanted the formation of a truly national government that would replace the Durrës government, which it advertised as a puppet of the Italians. For this reason he advised the notables to send two delegates from each city to a congress to be held before long. 65 The promised congress was held in the city of Lushnja from January 21 to 31, 1920. This congress, which is commemorated in the modern Albanian historiography as the moment of consolidation for the Albanian state, managed to overthrow the Durrës government and establish a government in Tirana. G. H. Bousquet, a French advisor to the newly formed Albanian government, reported that Tirana was chosen to be the capital of the new state because it was the center of Sunni Islam and the government wanted to control the Sunnis by being stationed there.⁶⁶

The new government of Albania was militarily defended by its 24year-old minister of the interior, Ahmet Bey Zogolli, who was a nephew of Esat Paşa. But, as expected, the structures of the new state came into conflict with the many quarreling factions dotted throughout the country. The most serious threat came from the supporters of Esat, who had supported the overthrow of the Durrës government and helped to organize the Congress of Lushnja. Esat's supporters were mostly ex-Osmanlı rebels who had previously removed Wied from power and now, when the Ottoman Empire was almost dead, shifted their loyalty and hopes from the sultan of Istanbul to the last standing paşa of Albania. Esat recognized the Congress of Lushnja and allowed Zog to present it to the people in Tirana. But when the new government did not give him due recognition and breached the deal by which he was to head the government the disagreement turned into a military conflict. From Paris Esat ordered his chief officers, Osman Bali and Osman Mema, to overthrow the nationalist government.

Fearful of Esat's power, the Lushnja government affirmed that it was going to send a commission to Paris in order to iron out discrepancies with the paşa. The nationalists feared the return of Esat in Albania,

however. Because of his popularity and authority among the Muslims, he might become the president. During May and June of 1920 the Esatist forces clashed with the nationalists headed by Ahmet Bey Zogolli and Bajram Curri. It is fair to assume that the nationalist government probably would have been toppled by Esat's forces if a young student, Avni Rustemi, had not assassinated him in Paris on June 13, 1920.

The assassination of Esat gave the nationalist government the opportunity to establish itself in the country and start the process of building the nation propagated since 1908. The government managed to extend its authority to almost all the major cities of Albania. Through different agreements made with Greece, Yugoslavia, and Italy and support from the British and the French they managed to consolidate the territorial integrity of Albania and thus paved the way for the transformation of Albania from an Ottoman province into a European state. The final brick in the construction of the new state was placed on December 20, 1920, when Albania got admitted into the League of Nations, supported by Britain.

After its establishment in Tirana, the Albanian government began to enforce its authority over the masses and pursued policies that Refik Toptani and Murat Toptani could not in 1908. The new government generated finances, recruited soldiers, issued a currency, banned the use of the Ottoman and Greek languages, opened secular schools, and started teaching people en masse that they were not Turks and Giaours or Greeks and Christians but ancient European Albanians and that Albania was an independent country, liberated from the Turks. The government declared illegal and punishable by death any opposition to the state, the flag, or the national (Latin) alphabet, the meddling of religion in politics, and the organization of committees promoting exclusivist interests. Three years after capturing Tirana the nationalists officially divided their Muslims and Orthodox Christians from their historical spiritual centers in Istanbul and established houses of worship for the Orthodox and Muslims. The Albanian governments and the Këshilli Kombëtar (National Assembly) established after the Congress of Lushnja were firmly secularist and Latinci nationalist.⁶⁷ Through their reforms and coercion they managed over the coming interwar years to transform Albania from the Ottoman province that it had been before 1908 (when the first Albanians "appeared" in the streets of Tirana) into a secular nation-state.

NOTES

- See the introduction by Raim Beluli in Ludwig von Thallóczy, Të ndodhunat e Shqypnis prej nji Gege që don vendin e tij, 47.
- 2. Kristo Frashëri, Historia e Tiranës, 302, 322.
- 3. Kastriot Dervishi, Historia e shtetit shqiptar, 185.
- 4. The term "Albanian vilayets" means Manastır/Monastir, Yanina/Yannina, Shkodra/Shkodër, and Kosova/Kosovo. In many nationalist Albanian publications these vilayets are depicted as being Albanian and part of greater ethnic Albania, but I use this term for convenience.
- 5. Frashëri, Historia e Tiranës, 293.
- 6. Hafiz Ibrahim Dalliu, Patriotizma në Tiranë, 21.
- 7. Ibid., 22.
- 8. Mustafa Kruja, "Shqiptari" i 1912 e shqiptarizma në qarkun e Durrsit, 313-19.
- 9. Eqrem Bej Vlora, Kujtime (1885–1925), 152.
- 10. Kasem Taipi, Zana Popullore (Kange Popullore), 208.
- The name Skënderije was used by the Shkodrans for the city of Shkodra. But it might have been Alexandria of Egypt as well.
- 12. Edhe nji kange e liris Turke, cited in Taipi, Zana Popullore, 211.
- 13. I mean "peasants" in the sense used by Eugen Weber in *Peasants into Frenchmen*.
- 14. Nathalie Clayer, Aux origines du nationalisme albanais.
- 15. M. Hakan Yavuz, "The Balkan Wars as a Catalyst of Homogenization," 28.
- 16. For a masterpiece example of this literature, see Sami Frashëri, Shqipëria, ç'ka çënë, ç'është e ç'do të bëhetë? (originally published in 1899), cited in Pashko Vasa, The Truth on Albania and the Albanians.
- 17. Miroslav Hroch, "Real and Constructed: The Nature of the Nation," in *The State of the Nation*, 95–96.
- 18. Frashëri, Historia e Tiranës, 290-91.
- 19. Teges (tekkes) were lodges of the various Sufi orders.
- 20. Dalliu, Patriotizma në Tiranë, 20.
- 21. Frashëri, Historia e Tiranës, 291.
- 22. Dalliu, Patriotizma në Tiranë, 21.
- 23. Ibid., 19-21, 28.
- 24. Fikret Karčić, The Bosniaks and the Challenges of Modernity, 68-69.
- 25. Dalliu, Patriotizma në Tiranë, 21.
- 26. Nathalie Clayer, *Në fillimet e nacionalizmit shqiptar*, 310–29.
- 27. Mustafa Kruja, "Shqiptari" i 1912, 317.
- Paschalis Kitromilides, "Imagined Communities' and the Origins of the National Question in the Balkans."
- 29. Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*, 332.
- 30. Ahmet Niyazi Bey, *Hatırat-ı Niyazi*, 49–50, quoted in George W. Gawrych, *The Crescent and the Eagle*.
- 31. H. Ali Korça, Shtatë ëndrat e Shqipërisë, 81.
- 32. The Shqiptars were a mixture of Sunni, Bektashi, Orthodox, and Catholic Albanian speakers. Sometimes Shqiptarë even included a number of Vlach, Greek, Turkish, and Slavic speakers who for different reasons embraced this secular

ethnic/linguistic identity, which was fostered by the power of Europe—and later the Albanian state—versus the religious identity of the Muslims and Christians. The meaning of the word *shqiptar* is unknown, and Albanian scholars still struggle to find its origin. Even though the terms "Arnavut" and "Arnavutlluk" existed in Ottoman Turkish, their meaning seems to have been more geographically descriptive than ethnic. In my doctoral dissertation I show how this term appears in some popular folksongs of late nineteenth century Albania, where it is used to describe Orthodox Christians of Toskeria and anti-Ottoman rebels living in the vilayet of Yanina. The term was later taken by the Bektashis and other Tosk groups and finally spread even in Gegëria. Shqiptari and Shqipëria (which today are translated as Albanian and Albania) did not have the same meaning as they do now. According to the Venetian documents of the eighteenth century from Dalmatia by the Provveditore Generale, the Venetians of Albania described their "Albania Veneta." This Albania was made mostly of lands that today belong to Montenegro, while much of the Shqipëria that we know now is not the same as the Venetian Albania, which Otto von Bismarck mentioned as well. For more, see Olsi Jazexhi, "Ottomans into Illyrians."

- 33. Dalliu, Patriotizma në Tiranë, 32-33.
- 34. Ibid., 29, 28, 32-35.
- Arkivi Qendror i Shtetit/Albanian Central State Archives, Tirana (AQSH), F. 32,
 D. 55, leter of Kristoforidhi to Lef Nosi, 23 Kallnuer 1909.
- 36. Kruja, "Shqiptari" i 1912, 313-19.
- 37. Hroch, "Real and Constructed," 103.
- 38. Federal Writers' Project, The Albanian Struggle in the Old World and New, 52.
- 39. Kristo Floqi, "Gjyqësia në Shqipërië," Përlindja e Shqipnies3 (1913): 2.
- 40. Miroslav Hroch, Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe, 23.
- 41. Arben Puto, Pavaresia shqiptare dhe diplomacia e fuqive te medha (1912–1914), 160.
- Great Britain, National Archives (formerly Public Record Office), Foreign Office Papers, London (hereafter FO) 421/293: Mr. Lamb to Sir. Edward Grey, Organic Statute for Albania, April 16, 1914
- 43. Dervishi, Historia e shtetit shqiptar, 59-61.
- 44. Nikollaq Zoi, Nje fage historie, 47.
- 45. Petro Nini Luarasi, Mallkim i Shkronjavet Shqipe dhe çpërfolja e Shqipëtarit, 15.
- Isa Blumi, "The Role of Education in the Formation of Albanian Identity and Its Myths," in *Albanian Identities*, ed. Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers and Bernd J. Fischer, 55.
- 47. Botim i Muzeut, Labova një rrëzë mali çel shkollën e parë shqipe (22 mars 1910), 8.
- 48. Sali Be Butkës, Ndjenja për Atdhe, 142, 146.
- 49. FO 421/293, Foreign Office to Lamb, June 17, 1914.
- 50. Sejfi Vllamasi, *Ballafaqime politike në Shqipëri*, *1897–1942*, 129–30.
- 51. Dervishi, *Historia e shtetit shqiptar*, 65–66, 69–77.
- 52. See the letter of Ludwig von Thallóczy directed to Vienna in December 1879: Thallóczy, *Të ndodhunat e Shqypnis prej nji Gege që don vendin e tij*, 77–79.
- 53. Lef Nosi, Dokumenta Historike për ti sherbye historisë sonë kombëtare, 271–73.
- 54. Valentina Duka, Qytetet e Shqipërisë 1912–1924, 47.
- 55. Nosi, *Dokumenta Historike*, 245, 264–66.

- 56. Vllamasi, Ballafaqime politike në Shqipëri, 137–39.
- 57. Posta e Shqypniës 4, December 16, 1916, 4.
- 58. Dervishi, Historia e shtetit shqiptar, 76.
- 59. Vllamasi, Ballafaqime politike në Shqipëri, 143–48.
- 60. Teki Selenica, Shqipria më 1927, 51.
- 61. Nosi, Dokumenta Historike, 276-77, 281.
- FO 421/298, memorandum by Mr. Leeper respecting Proposal for the Administration of Albania, January 30, 1920.
- 63. Vllamasi, Ballafaqime politike në Shqipëri, 180; F. Jacomini, La politica dell'Italia in Albania, 16, 32.
- 64. Mufid Libohova, Politika ime ndë Shqipëri, 35.
- 65. Vllamasi, Ballafaqime politike në Shqipëri, 184-85.
- 66. G. H. Bousquet, "Notes sur les reformes de l'Islam albanais"; quoted by Alexandre Popovic, Islamizmi Ballkanik Myslimanët e Europës Juglindore gjatë periudhës pasosmane, 44.
- 67. "Latinci" is the term that Osmanlıs used in Albania to label the secular nationalists who wanted to write the Albanian language with the Latin alphabet and separate Albania from the Ottoman Empire.

The Jihad Fatwa in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Fikret Karčić

A very important question at the beginning of World War I was whether the Ottoman Empire would enter the Great War that started among European states due to several causes, including redistribution of colonies. Germany was interested in having the Ottoman state on its side because of its geographical position and natural and human resources. The German pressure and the opportunism shown by Ottoman officials like Enver Paşa (1881–1922) led to the pact with Germany in August 1914. After Ottoman battleships under the command of Wilhelm Souchon (1864–1946) attacked the Russian fleet and bombarded Russian ports in the Black Sea on October 29, 1914, the Entente powers declared war on the Ottoman state (Russia on November 2, 1914; Britain and France on November 5). The Ottoman state reacted by declaring jihad against the Entente powers and its allies on November 11 and 14, 1914.

The Ottoman sovereign at that time held the title of caliph, and the decisions made in Istanbul had an effect on the lives of all the Muslims in the world. The German strategists counted on this particular Ottoman influence as they created the idea of giving the German and Ottoman goals in World War I an ideological religious interpretation and calling for jihad for all Muslims of the world. This idea relied on the dominant political and legal culture of the Ottoman state and the past practice of Muslim countries that justified their wars with the concept of jihad, especially during the nineteenth century. With that aim a fatwa (responsa) would be issued by the Mashikhat in Istanbul and be spread throughout Muslim countries, giving the war the underpinnings of an Islamic cause.¹

A jihad fatwa was declared in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which was a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire when World War I erupted and an ally of Germany and later Turkey. This issue was discussed in Bosnian, Serbian, and Croatian literature on several occasions. In particular, the effects of the jihad fatwa were discussed by Milorad Ekmečić, who viewed World War I as a religious war in the Balkans. Relying on literature, newspapers, and Austro-Hungarian documents, he came up with a thesis that the Ottoman declaration of holy war had effective results only in the Balkans. In this conception the holy war had a role in Albania and Macedonia and not in Bosnia and Herzegovina "because of the position of the Muslim population in the Monarchy."²

Bosnian historian Zijad Šehić offers a brief insight on the declaration of jihad in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the role of the Austro-Hungarian government in it.³ An article by Amir Duranović based on newspaper reports also sheds light on the declaration of jihad and the role of reis-ululema Džemaludin Efendi Čaušević in it.⁴

This chapter offers a closer examination of exactly when and how the jihad was proclaimed in Bosnia and Herzegovina and precisely who took part in this project, based on the recent literature on the so-called jihadization of World War I and the Ulema Medžlis archives in Sarajevo.⁵

A JIHAD "MADE IN GERMANY"

"Jihad fatwa" (*cihad-i ekber fetvasi*) is the term used in the literature to encompass the five fatwas decreed by the Mashikhat (Meşihat-i Celile-i İslamiye) in Istanbul. While it is the consensus view that November 11 and 14, 1914, are the dates on which the fatwas were published, Mustafa Aksakal clarifies that these fatwas were presented on November 11 before the Ottoman political, military, and religious notables in a closed ceremony and publicly proclaimed three days later, on November 14.6 The fatwas were prepared by the *fatwa-i emin* of the Mashikhat, Ali Haydar Efendi (Arsebuk) (1853–1935). He was a Shari^ca law scholar born in Batumi (Georgia), who had read the fatwas in the yard of Sultan Fatih's Mosque. Kuşçubaşı Eşref, a member and the future head of Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa (the intelligence service established by Enver Paşa on November 17, 1913), noted that the proclamation of the jihad fatwa got a cold reception and had faced even less enthusiasm in other regions.

The fatwas were officially published in the Mashikhat paper.¹⁰ They were signed by twenty-nine scholars and received the sultan's authorization: "I ordered the proclamation of this declaration, Mehmed Reşad."

The participation of the Ottoman Empire in World War I was justified by these fatwas, claiming that it was all for the sake of jihad. Muslims

all around the world were invited to take part in this effort and all Muslim communities under the administration of the Triple Entente (Britain, France, Russia, Serbia, Montenegro, and others) were invited to rise in rebellion against these governments.

The English translation of these reads as follows:11

Jihad

1330. When the sense of the threat of the enemies' attack on the Muslim world and the danger of plundering and ravaging of the Muslim countries and of capturing Muslim people became quite clear, the supreme ruler of Muslims ordered a jihad, urging people to enter the military forces. According to the regulations found in the divine verse *Infiru hifafen ve sikalen*...[?] jihad became an obligation for all Muslims. Is it an individual duty [fard al-'ayn] for Muslims from all sides, young and old, the infantry and the cavalry, to participate in jihad both in "blood and treasure"? An explanation is needed.

Answer: God Almighty knows best, it indeed is.

1331. Is it an individual duty for all Muslims under the government of the hostile states to participate in jihad once the jihad has been proclaimed against the governments that obviously support Russia, France, and England, countries that are open enemies of the Islamic Caliphate and whose aim is *neûzu billahi teâlâ* [God forbid] to strike at the root of the divine light of Islam by attacking the center of the Islamic Caliphate and the protected countries belonging to the sultan from both the land and the sea? An explanation is needed.

Answer: God Almighty knows best, it indeed is.

1332. If some Muslims *neûzu billahi teâlâ* refuse to participate in jihad when it is their individual duty, and when their refusal turns to a firm resistance, are they exposed to God's rage and punishment for such an inadequate attitude? An explanation is needed. Answer: God Almighty knows best, they indeed are.

1333. If the above-mentioned governments at war against the Muslim government kill its Muslim population, and if they are determined to destroy and kill all its learned men, is their warfare against the Muslim government *haram* [forbidden] and is

hellfire [*jahannam*] punishment for their crimes? An explanation is needed.

Answer: Allah Almighty knows best, it indeed is.

1334. If Muslims who live under the governments of England, France, Russia, Serbia, and Montenegro, which are included in the warfare, take part in the war as the soldiers against Germany and Austria that give aid to the Muslim government, will they face horrific suffering for inflicting severe damage to the Islamic Caliphate? An explanation is needed.

Answer: Allah Almighty knows best, they indeed will.¹²

The proclamation of the jihad fatwa was only one among many elements in a propaganda project designed in German and Ottoman military and political circles, as shown by several Western authors, including Wolfgang G. Schwanitz. The aim of this operation was to legalize the Ottoman state's entry into World War I and to mobilize Muslims from all around the world to support the Ottoman state and its allies. According to the designers of this operation, a conflict that is not necessarily religious in nature can be made to seem like a religious war by employing the concept of jihad. They relied on the dominant political culture of the Ottoman state and other Muslim countries to use the concept of jihad even in the modern era to justify domestic and foreign war and as a means of massive mobilization of the Muslim population. Mustafa Aksakal claims that the Ottoman state had proclaimed jihad on at least six occasions between 1768 and 1922. 14

According to Schwanitz's analysis, the jihadization of World War I consisted of five main elements:

- I. German archaeologist and diplomat Max von Oppenheim orchestrated the operation designed to encourage rebellions in the name of jihad in territories that were taken over by the opponents of the Central Powers.
- 2. The Eastern Journalism Department in Berlin, which employed mostly Orientalists, made concerted efforts to promote jihad among Muslims. In this context the Dutch Orientalist Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje made heavy use of the term "jihad" during World War I as an intellectual weapon "made in Germany."
- 3. The Ottoman şeyhülislam proclaimed a jihad fatwa.
- 4. The Tunisian mufti, Sheikh Salih al-Shari^ca al-Tunisi, transmitted

- the fatwa in the Arabic language in a brochure entitled named "The Truth of Jihad" ("Haqiqat al-Jihad").
- 5. Military operatives were instructed on the implementation of the jihad.¹⁵

Some historians claim that the range of this operation was rather limited and that the designers of the project must have been quite naïve to believe that issuing one jihad fatwa was enough to make all Muslims immediately act as they wanted. In their view Muslims all around the world are committed to the same values but have differing interests. Every individual and group decides which values are to be applied in any given situation. Altogether the issuing of the jihad fatwa did not cause a large-scale rebellion of Muslims against the Entente efforts. Eventually the Central Powers lost the war. The Ottoman state transformed into a national state (the Republic of Turkey) that abolished the caliphate, the Mashikhat and the Shari^ca.

THE PROCLAMATION OF THE FATWA IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

As the highest religious body of the Ottoman state and Sunni Muslims, the Meşihat-i Celile-i İslamiye by the act of Muharrem 8, 1333 (November 26, 1914) sent the text of the jihad fatwa to the *riyaset* of the Islamic community, asking for it to be proclaimed in Bosnia and Herzegovina.¹⁶

After having received the jihad fatwa, the reis-ul-ulema officially invited the muftis and other scholars for consultation in Sarajevo. There is no detailed information on the consultation, but the daily paper Sarajevski List, December 12, 1914, reported the proclamation of jihad in Sarajevo in detail. On Friday, December 11, 1914, after the Jum'a prayer, in the presence of about three thousand people (including Muslim soldiers from the Sarajevo garrison and Muslim high school students) Hafiz Esad Efendi Sabrihafizović, the imam and hatib (preacher) of the Bey's Mosque, read a paragraph from the Qur'an (du'a) about victory. Then the reis-ul-ulema, wearing a ceremonial dress, came up to the pulpit (minbar) decorated with green flags and read the epistle of the şeyhülislam, Mustafa Hajri Efendi and the jihad fatwa, first in Turkish and then in Bosnian. He addressed the gathered people, asking how Bosnian Muslims would respond to the proclamation of jihad. The reis-ul-ulema declared:

Today this monarchy of ours takes us to war against its enemies and at the same time against enemies of holy Islam. The jihad and the war of our monarchy serve one and the same purpose. We have been offered an opportunity to fulfill our religious duty of jihad, fighting under the glorious and courageous flags of our monarchy. By fighting for the victory of our monarchy, at the same time we fight for the salvation and happiness of Islam.¹⁷

The *Sarajevski List* also reported in the same issue that the reis-ululema Džemaludin Efendi Čaušević on the previous day, Muharrem 22, 1333 (December 10, 1914), had sent a message to all muftis, Shari^ca law judges, and district (*waqf-maarif*) committees in Bosnia and Herzegovina:

According to the noble fatwas of the high Mashikhat and the epistle of the *şeyhülislam*, we, Bosnian Muslims, are obliged to respond to jihad with both our bodies and properties. We are happy to have been offered this opportunity to participate in jihad by fighting in the courageous and glorious army of our monarchy. As far as the jihad by properties is concerned, this can be done by giving financial aid to our Sublime Caliphate if we give donations to Hilal-i Ahmer.¹⁸

The reis-ul-ulema consolidated the interests of both monarchy and Islam and called for the fulfillment of jihad duties of bodily engagement by serving in the imperial Austro-Hungarian military and meeting the duties of giving financial aid to jihad by donating to the Ottoman Red Crescent.

The proclamation of jihad in Sarajevo could not have been done without the consent and support of the Austro-Hungarian government.¹⁹ It even played an active role in transmitting the proclamation of jihad across military units. An official letter of the Ministry of War was communicated to the reis-ul-ulema by an act of the Military Command in Sarajevo on February 27, 1915, number 4218, regarding the jihad proclamation in military units. The reis-ul-ulema responded:

As a molla of the holy places of Mecca and Medina, the reis-ululema for Bosnia and Herzegovina, by the consent of the Şeyh-ül Islam in Constantinople, I have decided to proclaim jihad to the Muslim soldiers serving in the courageous army of our merciful

monarch, His Excellence Kaiser and King Franz Joseph I. I shall do this holy act in a solemn way in the Bey's Mosque in Sarajevo on March 7, from 11 to 12 AM for the soldiers in Sarajevo and on [?] the Alipasha Bridge. Because it is not possible for me personally to proclaim jihad in other places, I have authorized muftis in Tuzla (for Tuzla, Gračanica, and Lukavac), Banja Luka (for Banja Luka, Gradiška, Tešanj, Derveta, B. Novi, B. Dubica, Prnjavor, and Sanski Most), and Travnik (for Travnik, Zenica, and Zavidovići). Jihad will be proclaimed to soldiers stationed in Visoko and Kiseljak by the mufti of Sarajevo in Visoko on March 7 from 11 to 12 AM and in Kiseljak on March 8, also from 11 to 12 AM. I sent an attachment of one copy of my message to the said muftis. In that sense I shall send messages to military imams as well and authorize them to proclaim jihad to soldiers beyond the borders of Bosnia and Herzegovina in agreement with the authorities. Because there are Muslim soldiers in the district of Mostar, I propose to conduct a jihad proclamation in Herzegovina in the same manner.20

The proclamation of jihad to Muslim soldiers was done by the reis-ululema and the authorized muftis in March 1915, as verified by a number of documents in the Ulema Medžlis archive. The report by the mufti of Sarajevo sent to the presidency of the Ulema Medžlis described the event:

Traveling fees for muftis who visited stationary units in their regions were to be covered by the government. The Ulema Medžlis was informed by an official letter from the Provincial Government that 370 krones and

12 hellers were approved for the traveling costs of the muftis during the period of jihad proclamation.²⁴

The news published in *Sarajevski List* on March 9, 1915, under the title "The Proclamation of the Holy War to Muslim Soldiers in the Budapest Garrison" proves that jihad was proclaimed to the Muslim soldiers in the Austro-Hungarian military beyond the borders of Bosnia and Herzegovina. A certain Captain Ibruljević read the fatwa in "Croatian" and the military imam recited the prayer for the victory of Muslims, after which soldiers shouted: "Long live Sultan Mehmed, Kaiser and King Franz Joseph, and Kaiser Wilhelm." Copies of the jihad fatwa were sent to the units on fronts where considerable Muslim soldiers were present. 26

The Visoko muderris, Mustafa-Nedžati Salihbegović, who was authorized by the mufti of Sarajevo to proclaim jihad in Kiseljak, reported that the relations between Muslim soldiers in military units and their military officers were not very idyllic. The kaiser and king was far from the imaginary figure of a mujahid, as some Muslim authors in Bosnia and Herzegovina claimed.²⁷ The muderris wrote: "At the same time I report that a number of Muslim soldiers complained that some officers offended their mothers and fathers, their Turkish and mujahid God and saint, which naturally had a negative effect on these soldiers as well as on those who were pressured to shave off their beards."²⁸

In order to develop loyalty to the monarchy and give Islamic legal backing for Muslim participation in World War I, the reis-ul-ulema, Dže-maludin Čaušević, circulated a letter. He asked *muallims* in elementary religious schools (*mekteb-i ibtidaijje*) to include topics related to war in the educational and pedagogical process:²⁹

Because not all our Muslim children attend primary school, but most of them are in *mektebs*, ³⁰ all these children would remain beyond the reach of this beneficial undertaking if we do not disseminate information about the war in mektebs and for these causes use them, especially for raising awareness of *jihad and causes for which our caliph, as the heir of "Peygamberi-Zishan"* [the Noble Prophet] *our merciful kaiser and monarch took their swords from their scabbards.*³¹

According to the report of a muallim in Bosanska Gradiška, the fatwa was issued in a circular letter. Among the topics introduced in the girls' elementary religious school were "the cause of the participation of our caliph as the heir of Peygamberi-Zishan, together with our merciful kaiser and monarch" and "the proclamation of jihad." ³²

THE JIHAD FATWA IN PUBLIC

During this time, Sarajevo newspapers regularly reported from the Ottoman battlefields in the section "The Islamic Holy War." The proclamation of jihad was also reported in other Muslim countries, using propaganda to spread the idea of jihad among Muslims. 34

In reaction to the jihad fatwa, a high school teacher in Bihać named Ibrahim Hakki Čokić issued a brochure titled "The Holy War on the Occasion of the Anniversary of the Jihad" (*Džihadi-mukaddes*).³⁵ This brochure dealt with fundamental questions about the nature of jihad. What is a jihad? What types of jihad are there? Who can proclaim jihad? How can one take part in jihad? Čokić wrote within the boundaries of conventional classical sources of jihad. He supported the jihad fatwa of the *şeyhülislam* and called upon Bosnian Muslims to help the jihad of the Ottoman state. He was convinced that the conditions for the general jihad existed and that the proclamation of such a jihad by a caliph was legal. According to Čokić, "general jihad, as it is today, is enacted to keep God's word steady and not to decry it; so that the Religion of Islam and the Law of the Prophet Muhammad should not fall under non-Islamic authority, and not to let it decide which divine regulations to permit and which to forbid." ³⁶

Čokić then speculated what would happen if Bosnian Muslims let the Dardanelles, Istanbul, Jerusalem (Kuds-i Sharif), Mecca, and Medina fall into the enemies' hands, which in his view was a possible scenario. This would leave a small, weak Turkey around Konya in Anatolia, while the other cities would be divided among the enemies.³⁷

Three committees were established in Turkey to support the call for jihad: one committee was set up for direct aid in the war cause; a second committee to aid the navy; and the third for care and treatment of the wounded, which was controlled by the Ottoman Red Crescent. The aid that Bosnian Muslims could give to the jihad is obvious: those mobilized in the Austro-Hungarian army directly participated in jihad and the rest could help by giving financial aid.³⁸ Čokić made a plea for aid to the Ottoman Red Crescent.

CONCLUSION

From these findings we can conclude that the jihad fatwa of the Istanbul Mashikhat was proclaimed in Bosnia and Herzegovina by the reisul-ulema of the Islamic community, muftis, and authorized people (such as local muderris). In this way Bosnian Muslim religious structures

transmitted a religious-legal explanation from a worldwide Islamic authority to the local level. The classification of World War I as jihad did not originate from Bosnian Muslim scholars and institutions, who were merely conveying this classification through their local institutional connections in the Islamic community of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Mashikhat.

The proclamation of the fatwa in Bosnia and Herzegovina was made in a solemn manner in the Bey's Mosque in Sarajevo on Friday, December 11, 1914. In March 1915 it was proclaimed in units of the Austro-Hungarian army in Bosnia and Herzegovina and elsewhere in the monarchy.

The attitude of the Bosnian ulemas, presented in the figure of the reis-ul-ulema, was that Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina should implement one type of jihad—engagement in the war—by serving in the Austro-Hungarian military. The other type of jihad—financial contribution—should be implemented by giving aid to the Ottoman Red Crescent.

The Austro-Hungarian government in Bosnia and Herzegovina had accepted in a limited way the "jihadization" project of World War I. "Limited" refers to the circumstance that the proclamation of jihad was made only to Muslim soldiers of the Imperial army. The general public and non-Muslim soldiers were excluded from this endeavor. The proclamation of jihad was designed to provide religious motivation to the soldiers. The costs of the entire project were assumed by the Austro-Hungarian Provincial Government. Therefore the use of the jihad concept was limited and controlled. The Austro-Hungarian government in Bosnia and Herzegovina was likely aware that greater popularization of jihad might have negative consequences for interreligious and interethnic relations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially by antagonizing the Bosniak and Serbian population.

It can be also seen that the concept of jihad and the jihad fatwa were used in newspapers in Bosnia and Herzegovina of that period and popularized through a brochure. The aim could not have been to intensify the antagonism between Muslims and Christians, however, because in World War I the Ottomans formed a coalition with Germany and Austro-Hungary, which are traditionally Christian countries. Any notion that the conflict in the Balkans had a purely religious character is negated by recognizing that the jihad was not directed against non-Muslim populations in the Balkans but against the forces that were fighting in favor of the Entente.

The available sources do not support the conclusion that Muslim scholars in Bosnia and Herzegovina were aware of the wider ramifications of the jihad fatwa. The ulema participated in this project while being blind to its overall design and aims.

NOTES

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- 1. The Mashikhat was the highest religious authority for Sunni Muslims.
- 2. Milorad Ekmečić, Ratni ciljevi Srbije 1914, 137–51 (quotation on 150).
- 3. Zijad Šehić, *U smrt za cara i domovinu*, 109–11.
- 4. Amir Duranović, "Prva godina Prvog svjetskog rata: Džemaludin ef. Čaušević na stranicama Sarajevskog lista," in *International Conference "Bosnia and Herzegovina within the Austro-Hungary 1878–1918" Held in Sarajevo on March 30–31, 2009: Conference Proceedings* (Sarajevo: Filozofski Fakultet, 2010), 195–203. *Ra'is al-ulama* in Arabic means "the head of Muslim scholars, the official," the title of the head of the Islamic community in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- Majlis al-ulama in Arabic means "council of Muslim scholars," the highest governing body of the Islamic community in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the Austro-Hungarian period.
- 6. Mustafa Aksakal, "'Holy War Made in Germany'?" Andrew Mango (Ataturk, 136) states that the fatwa was read in the Topkapi Palace on November 13, 1914, and that on November 23 the sultan, as the caliph, ordered its proclamation all around the Islamic world.
- 7. Fatwa-i emin means an official responsible for giving legal opinions.
- 8. Murat Kasap, Osmanlı Gürcüleri, 276-77.
- 9. Mango, Ataturk, 136.
- 10. Ceride-i ilmiye, 1/7 evail-i muharrem 1333/beginning of November 1914, 437–40.
- 11. This translation was done by Professor Kerima Filan, to whom I am grateful. The translation was made from the text of the fatwas in the Ottoman Turkish language as it was published and enumerated in İsmail Cebeci, Ceride-i Ilmiye Fetvalari, 230–31.
- 12. Ibid., Cihâd-i ekber, I/7, Evâil-i Muharrem 1333, 437-40.
- 13. Wolfgang G. Schwanitz, "Euro-Islam by 'Jihad Made in Germany," in *Islam in Inter-War Europe*, edited by Nathalie Clayer and Eric Germain (London: Hurst and Company, 2008), 271–301. See also Tilman Ludke, *Jihad Made in Germany*; and Gotfried Hagen, "German Heralds of Holy War." Unlike these authors, while not denying the German interference, Aksakal claims that the jihad fatwa relied on another Ottoman tradition and that the Ottoman government of the period did not need Germany to convince it of the advantages of the jihad proclamation: Mustafa Aksakal, "'Holy War Made in Germany?" 184.

- 14. Aksakal, "'Holy War Made in Germany?" 189.
- 15. Schwanitz, "Euro-Islam by 'Jihad Made in Germany," 275.
- 16. Ibrahim Hakki Čokić, Džihadi-mukaddes (Sveti rat), 25. Riyasat in Arabic means "the presidency," the leadership of the Islamic community in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- 17. Sarajevski List, 306, December 12, 1914.
- 18. Ibid. Hilal-i Ahmer was the Red Crescent of the Ottoman state.
- 19. See Šehić, Usmrt za cara i domovinu, 110.
- Gazi Husrev-bey's Library, Ulema Medžlis archive, the Reis-ul-Ulema for Bosnia and Herzegovina, 28/02/1915, no. 458/1915.
- 21. Fard in Arabic means "obligatory duty."
- 22. Mudarris in Arabic means "lecturer."
- 23. Gazi Husrev-bey's Library, Ulema Medžlis archive, Act of the Mufti Office for the Sarajevo district, no. 107/915, 14/03/1915.
- Gazi Husrev-bey's Library, Ulema Medžlis archive, Provincial Government Act no. 6476 prez., 5/07/1916.
- 25. *Sarajevski List*, 69, March 9, 1915.
- 26. Šehić, Usmrt za cara i domovinu, 111.
- 27. Mujahid in Arabic means "holy warrior."
- Gazi Husrev-bey's Library, Ulema Medžlis archive, Mustafa-Nedžati Salihbegović's letter of April 8, 1915.
- 29. Muallim in Arabic means "religious teacher."
- 30. Mekteb in Arabic means "primary religious school."
- Gazi Husrev-bey's Library, Ulema Medžlis archive, circular of Reis-ul-Ulema, November 2, 1915, no. 59 Prez (emphasis in the original).
- Gazi Husrev-bey's Library, Ulema Medžlis archive, list of lectures held in girls' elementary religious school in Bosanska Gradiška from November 15, 1915, to February 15, 1916.
- 33. See, for example, Sarajevski List, throughout 1915.
- 34. *Sarajevski List* 20, January 7–January 20, 1915; 21, January 21–February 8, 1915; 34, February 3–February 21, 1915.
- 35. The phrase *džihadi mukaddes*, meaning "holy jihad," in this title is interesting. It is strange that the author uses the adjective "holy" with the word "jihad." Such a thing was not done even by classical Muslim authors, but this phrase could be found in works of Turkish authors who wrote about jihad during World War I, such as Ahmed Emin's *Cihad-i mukaddes farzdir*, published in 1916.
- 36. Čokić, Džihadi-mukaddes (Sveti rat), 7.
- 37. Ibid., 4.
- 38. Ibid., 14.

The Creation of the Serbian or Yugoslav State

The Historiography of Bosnia and Herzegovina on World War I

Edin Radušić

During the Yugoslav socialist period in Bosnian-Herzegovinian historiography, in addition to the story of the struggle against fascism, historians also considered the narrative of anti-imperialism as an equally important phase in the struggle for the freedom of the Yugoslav peoples. In this tendentious account the Bosniak Muslim elite, and indeed the Bosniak Muslim people, fared pretty badly because the Bosniaks were identified as a part of the Ottoman system of government rule (foreign and imperial) and later as a community mostly loyal to the new Austro-Hungarian rulers. At the same time, Serb or Serb-Montenegrin leaders as the bearers of the process of creating a Serbian and Montenegrin nation often transferred to the domestic Muslim-Slav population the enmity toward "foreigners." The most prominent example of this was the Montenegrin bishop Petar Petrović Njegoš, who accused the Muslim Slavs of accepting the forbidden faith of the foreign ruler (Islam) and "became Turks." In this Serb-centric nationalist discourse, the Serbs became heroes of all South Slavs, even though they attacked and persecuted some of the South Slavs (Muslims) who were also native to the land. Their "great deeds" filled the history textbooks of the newly formed Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. Schools, squares, and streets were named for them even during the ostensibly nonchauvinist socialist Yugoslav period. The building of such a narrative of Balkan Christian national heroes (especially Serbs) in the Yugoslav and Bosnian-Herzegovinian social context was helped significantly by the socialist historiography, which did

not differ greatly from the basic ideological and political understanding of the Serbian nationalist period. The dominant historians of that time managed to merge the Serb and general Yugoslav national interests concerning the key concepts and themes of Bosnian-Herzegovinian and Yugoslav history of the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century. Thus Serb interests and identity claims became the dominant features in defining the goals and aims of all inhabitants of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

These remarks can be applied in full to the question of the change of rule in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1918 as a direct consequence of World War I. The positive change of the Yugoslav Communist policy toward the Muslim Bosniaks at the end of the 1960s (more so in Bosnia and Herzegovina than in other parts of Yugoslavia) slowly changed the official anti-Muslim Bosnian-Herzegovinian historiography. A complete break with the previously established evaluation of the past came only with the dissolution of the common Yugoslav state. As a result of the dissolution of Yugoslavia and Serbia's central role in the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina a rethinking and revision of attitudes occurred. Replacing the much more enlightened rule of the Austro-Hungarian Dual Monarchy (at least as far as Bosnian Muslims and Croats were concerned) in Bosnia-Herzegovina with the much more oppressive and violent Yugoslav/Serbian authority was seen as an ostensibly positive and progressive change. The final sharp break with the earlier "Serbian attitude" in Bosnian historiography was caused by the reality of the war and by the systematic war crimes against the Bosnian Muslim (Bosniak) population.

A large number of works have been published in Yugoslav historiography on the complex issue of World War I, the position of "Yugoslav territory," and the faith and identity of the Yugoslav peoples and their wishes during the war. These questions (in a broader sense) have not been equally treated in Bosnian-Herzegovinian historiography. No books or articles treat all aspects of political, social, economic, and cultural changes in Bosnia and Herzegovina during World War I. Some aspects of this complex issue are fragmentarily treated within broader studies. Also, some scholarly problems connected with the war are analyzed in an isolated fashion, such as the development of Bosnian-Herzegovinian society, the war economy, the legal status of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the agrarian question, and political, economic, and spiritual changes during the war. These questions concerning the war period usually have been treated partially and without complete archival research. Only the case of the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand is an exception. Some more

comprehensive studies on Bosnian or Yugoslav history written outside of Bosnian-Herzegovinian historiography deal with the period of World War I, but they are not the focus of this chapter.⁶

This negative conclusion on the shortcomings of Bosnian-Herzegovinian historiography concerning the World War I period is in stark contrast to the importance of Bosnian history in this period for the broader region and continent. As is well known, the event that directly caused World War I took place in Sarajevo. From the beginning of the war to the autumn of 1915 Bosnia-Herzegovina was a war zone during the joint offensive of the Austro-Hungarian, German, and Bulgarian armies that occupied Serbia (Montenegro capitulated soon afterward). After the occupation of Serbia conflict in the region did not subside: more than half a million Austro-Hungarian soldiers were in Bosnia, more than 250,000 Bosnians were recruited into the Austrian Army (15 percent of the total population), and the domestic population suffered due to political repression (especially the Serbs) as well as famine and epidemics. Most importantly in terms of this chapter, discussions, debates, and political plans concerning developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina after the war had emerged among local inhabitants in Bosnia and other South Slavic lands: would Bosnia be divided between Austria and Hungary or would it be a part of a South Slavic political unit inside Austria-Hungary or would it join a common South Slavic state under Serbian leadership?⁷

Despite the limited results of Bosnian historiography concerning World War I as well as the dramatic changes caused by the war, a sufficient number of works were written to enable an evaluation of tendencies in the historiography of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Although it is impossible to come to an academic consensus on all these scientific problems, this chapter provides some basic scholarly/quasi-scholarly orientations and characteristics of Bosnian-Herzegovinian historiography on the topic.

Historiography is shaped to a considerable degree by a certain time and political context, so it is possible to connect major tendencies in historiography with the social-political frameworks within which it was crafted (Kingdom of Yugoslavia, socialist Yugoslavia, wartime Yugoslavia, and a postwar nominally independent Bosnia-Herzegovina). In the framework of the Yugoslav states the dominant view of historiography was that World War I represented a turning point for the better and a fulfillment of popular wishes for the abolishment of foreign Austro-Hungarian domination over South Slavic peoples (the Ottomans left in 1878 and 1912). The crises in Yugoslavia and the dissolution of the common South Slavic state, however, led to a reevaluation of this dominant model. Two

questions arose at this time. First, would the end of Austro-Hungarian rule and the creation of the new Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes really be better for all of the peoples in Bosnia and Herzegovina? Second, was the new state essentially a Yugoslav state or really a Serb state with a wider Yugoslav name? These two questions are central in my analysis of the historiographical texts written on Bosnia-Herzegovina in the prewar period, during the war (1992 to 1995), and soon after, with a special emphasis on evaluating the impact and status of the Bosniak Muslims in these dramatic transformations.

It is important to note that during the dissolution of Yugoslavia historiography in Bosnia and Herzegovina became dispersed. It is very difficult to follow all of its discourses. Therefore I have decided to analyze dominant streams linked to the official institutions, particularly historiographical-political attitudes among Serb historians from Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as trends in the overall Bosnian-Herzegovinian historiography.

Bosnian-Herzegovinian historiography had not evolved independently until the 1990s and was under the quite strong influence of neighboring historiographies, especially Serbian historiography. Serbian studies had dominated other South Slavic historiographies in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and had decisive influence on writings on the history of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Consequently it influenced the writings on World War I, determining the standards that have characterized the war, events in the war, and the shift of power on the Yugoslav level.

This subordinate role of Bosnian historiography in relation to the leading Yugoslav historiographies (Serbian and to a lesser degree Croatian) derived from several factors. Strong Bosnian academic institutions that could create their own independent path to discovering and presenting the past were lacking. The political and scientific interests of religious and national groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina were divided. Most important was the absence of an autonomous state that would create institutions with a different attitude to the position of Bosnia and Herzegovina than in more dominant South Slavic countries.

The development of academic institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the full sense began with the establishment of the University of Sarajevo in 1949 and the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Bosnia and Herzegovina (ANUBiH), which arose from the Scientific Society set up in 1951. Before that the official Serbian historiography had already been imposed

for many decades in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Bosnian-Herzegovinian historiography could be different only through research on different topics (themes from Bosnian history), not according to methodology and attitudes to history. It had to lead to a final simplified assessment of historical processes and historical turning points (including the results of World War I).

The domination of the Serbian historiographic pattern, definitely established in Royal Yugoslavia, continued in socialist Yugoslavia. The Yugoslav (and Bosnian) historiography of the socialist period was under the influence of two political/ideological concepts: Serbian nationalist ideology and the Communist theory of class and dialectical materialism. Both were united in a hostile attitude toward the multinational empires of that period: the Ottoman Empire and the Austro-Hungarian Dual Monarchy. At the same time, Bosnian historiography did not ignore economic and cultural development of the country during the Austro-Hungarian rule.9

Beginning in the late 1970s a more critical and liberal attitude to the Bosnian-Herzegovinian past could be seen, symbolized by publication of the history of the Socialist Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. 10 This kind of Bosnian historiography, which peaked in the 1990s, put Bosnia-Herzegovina and the views of the Bosniak Muslims more in focus. In this narrative the interpretation of Bosnian society under Ottoman rule was more favorable than in earlier works. The attitude toward the history of Bosnia and Herzegovina under Austria-Hungarian rule also had changed to some degree. Although the new approach was a departure from the earlier attitude, from its beginning to the end of the 1980s Bosnian historiography did not change its general evaluation of the transition of sovereignty from Austria-Hungary to the Kingdom of Serbs, Slovenes, and Croats. Some differences exist between the older and the younger generation of influential historians of nineteenth-century Bosnia (and between members of different Slavic nations). But a similar overall historiographic attitude continues from the beginning of the first Yugoslavia to the end of the second one.11

For those who did not agree with this official Yugoslav/Serbian interpretation of historical changes from an empire to a nation or supranational state, even a minor effort to venture out of the acceptable narratives was not welcome.

"Serbian experience" in creation of the state was taken as a positive pattern, so opposition to Austro-Hungarian rule, which was "oppressing" the Slavic people and the lower classes, was judged to be a popular and righteous revolt. National movements during Austro-Hungarian rule, Serb prewar and war activities, and the actions of others against Austria-Hungary and its allies were seen as a just struggle against an unjust "foreign" political system created by the Great Powers at the Berlin Congress (and evaluated as a temporary settlement).

The beginning of the 1990s was a new period in historiography in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The political crisis in Yugoslavia and dissolution of the common Yugoslav state in the late 1980s and early 1990s, followed by the country's democratization, resulted in the emancipation of part of Bosnian-Herzegovinian historiography in relation to the dominant Serbian one. But these processes led to divisions among Bosnian-Herzegovinian historians. Three historical circles formed. In their attitudes to Bosnian history and its connection with contemporary political and societal trends these groups were basically no different from the three dominant political narratives in Bosnia-Herzegovina: Croatian, Bosnian (or Bosniak?), and Serbian. The first two were revisionist circles in relation to the prevailing Yugoslav historiography in general and thus in relation to the most important issues connected to World War I, while the Serb circle continued with the previous dominant historiographic themes and conclusions. Freed from all restraints of living in the same country with other ethnic groups, the Serb circle became more openly and uncompromisingly an advocate of "absolute" (Serbian) historical truth.

Although the two "Serb" universities in the present Bosnia and Herzegovina (Banja Luka and East Sarajevo) have history departments, they have not developed their own independent attitude and are followers of the conservative Serb national historiographic circles in Belgrade. The true center of Serb historiographic circles in Bosnia and Herzegovina was formed in Belgrade, undoubtedly under the leadership of Milorad Ekmečić. He is the head of the Serb historiography of the nineteenth and twentieth century (and in general) in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SANU) of the Republika Srpska was founded in 1996, as the highest representative institution in the field of science and the arts in the republic (an entity of Bosnia and Hercegovina with a majority Serb population). Like two "Serb" history departments in Bosnia and Herzegovina, however, it has not become a prominent historiographic center with its own attitude to Bosnia and Herzegovina and the South Slavic past (the Institute for History is part of SANU). Except for a vast number of publications, it has remained a

shadow of Belgrade and SANU. In the long term the academy served only a temporary need due to the impossibility of the planned annexation of Bosnia to Serbia that Milorad Ekmečić promoted. Hints of change in these institutions caused by political reality, reflected in the strengthening of these institutions and the domestic (Bosnian Serb) intelligentsia, are only beginning to be seen. The results of these changes cannot be fully determined.

The establishment and regular publication of the journal *Glasnik Udruženja Arhivskih Radnika Republike Srpske* (Journal of the Society of Archival Workers of the Republika Srpska), which is mainly a historiographical journal, is a part of these changes.¹³ The journal *Radovi Filozofskog Fakulteta* (Journal of the Faculty of Philosophy) of the University of Eastern Sarajevo is also published regularly, but with a modest input of historiographical papers.¹⁴ Even so, no significant progress from the previously defined discourse of Serb national historiography seems to be visible. The Serb national heroes and the national struggle for the unity of Serbs are still glorified, not treating the wishes of other peoples who live together with Serbs in the same way.¹⁵

Milorad Ekmečić's understandings of Yugoslav history from the nineteenth century until the present are almost the same. He has generally assessed the Ottoman Empire and Habsburg Empire as foreign states that hampered the free development of local populations and their national self-determination as South Slav nations naturally inclined toward the vision of Yugoslavia or a Greater Serbia (nearly synonymous in his attitude). As the Serbian autonomous (later independent) state was emerging on the free small landholdings protected by the national state (Serbia), this was taken as the rightful pattern for other parts of the South Slavic lands (particularly for Bosnia-Herzegovina) and was accomplished at the end of World War I through the establishment of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. The aspirations of non-Orthodox national or religious groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina (especially Bosniak Muslims), however, were not on an equal footing with the wishes of the Serb population.

At the beginning of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ekmečić went from Sarajevo to Belgrade, where he established a very influential and official Serbian-supported historiographic-ideological circle. Although he had been seen as one of the leading historians of the nineteenth and twentieth century earlier in Sarajevo and partly in Belgrade, Ekmečić reached the peak of his social impact in the late 1980s and early 1990s (earlier his influence was in Yugoslavia and then only among the

Serbs). He institutionalized a circle in Belgrade that significantly exceeded historiographical boundaries. Ekmečić attempted to define the Serb question in Bosnia and Herzegovina and offer a solution to it. He initiated the establishment of the Committee for the History of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Belgrade in 1993 as a part of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts. In the first issue of the Journal for the History of Bosnia and Herzegovina (the journal of the committee) Ekmečić revealed the essence of the political background of the overall project. He emphasized that the presidency of the SANU had given consent for the establishment of the committee essentially because "Bosnia and Herzegovina were not only an integral part of a Serbian national entity, and one of the provinces in which the Serbian people lived, but the key area that has defined the overall development of the Serbs. It is impossible to separate Serbia and Bosnia except in mechanical terms, which are imposed by external circumstances rather than internal differences." ¹⁸ Again he tried to undermine Bosnia and Herzegovina terminologically as a political unit, insisting that the adjoining territory consisted of two distinct historical provinces, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Ekmečić continually stresses the mutual relations between the agrarian issue and the Serb national question, ¹⁹ giving it a timeless dimension and bringing together the nineteenth and twentieth centuries:

Like fourteen [other] times in the history of Bosnia, in the civil war of 1992 the facts reiterate that the learned elite of Serbian society wanted one [general Serbian not only Serb Orthodox state], while the Serbian peasantry reduced the objective to its Orthodox and narrower Serbian dimension. The unavoidable reality matured and won in the history of social processes in the last two centuries. People who think that they have a choice in this are wrong. As many times in the past, every defeat of the efforts to create a purely Serbian national state means the postponement of the final goal for the sake of a vague and more unreliable future.²⁰

The committee has issued the journal *Proceedings of the History of Bosnia* and organized two scientific conferences with the primary aim of confirming Ekmečić's definition of the Serbian question in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the assessment that "the current historiography on Bosnia and Herzegovina...is burdened with mythology, irrationality, and proving the synthetic identity [Bosnian-Herzegovinian, Bosniak]." From 1995 to 2008 five volumes of the proceedings were published. Not

all of the individual papers published in the journal fully followed the already presented aim, but no article questioned Ekmečić's understanding of the Serbian question in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Nine articles in these eight issues were directly or indirectly related to World War I and to the character of the Austro-Hungarian rule.²² Their detailed analysis confirms the Serbian character of the journal. Although the main thesis of my work is not directly discussed in these articles, the basic thesis of the Austro-Hungarian Empire as the occupying power and the righteousness of the Serb struggle for liberation, including the assassination of the archduke, are not questioned. Serbian and Bosnian interests as well as Serbian and Yugoslav interests merged into one, without taking into account the interests and opinions in the other non-Serb nations. The authors of articles are primarily interested in the role of Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina. They write about the Serbian newspaper Srbobran, the issue of studying the history of Serbian people in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serb actions against the Austrian occupation, persecution of Serbian priests in Bosnia in 1914, the attitude of the British on the involvement of Serbia in the Sarajevo assassination, and other topics.

For example, Ranka Gašić follows the old argument that the occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1878 prevented the unification of Bosnia with Serbia and postponed the question of Yugoslav unification. Thus Srbobran's commitment to legal unification of Bosnia with Croatia and Slavonia in the framework of Austria-Hungary was harmful.²³ Using his own terminology, Đorđe Mikić continues the Serb interpretation of the character of the Balkan Wars, speaking about the "liberation" of Old Serbia and Macedonia and the "newly liberated areas" in that war. In the same article he systematically writes "muslims" with a lowercase m, denying the nationality of the Bosniak Muslims. In the conclusion of the article he builds the myth of sacrifice, pointing out that the Austrian government measures against Bosnian Serbs were not completed at the end of the Balkan Wars: "everything had been much more sharply repeated with the beginning of the First World War, whose blade was again directed against the Serbs and their political and cultural associations and individuals."24

In his work on the British attitude toward Serbia's involvement in World War I Aleksandar Rastović unambiguously chooses the "Serbian truth" about the assassination:

in the British scientific community we can find two diametrically opposed views on the involvement of Serbia in the Sarajevo assassination and its guilt for the outbreak of World War I. The views of Mary Durham were without any scientific basis...she skillfully utilized them for her anti-Serbian propaganda and activity. On the other hand, thanks to the great efforts of Professor Seaton Watson and his publication based on reliable sources and his serious scientific monograph, the British public has learned that official Belgrade had nothing to do with the assassination in Sarajevo and that Serbia had no responsibility for the beginning of the First World War.²⁵

Ekmečić's historiographic-political circle has organized two scientific conferences: Bosnia and Herzegovina from the Middle Ages until Recent Times (December 13–15, 1994) and Islam, the Balkans, and the Great Powers (XIV–XX Centuries) (December 11–13, 1996). The materials from these meetings have been published as separate books. The results of the conferences follow the basic goal of Bosnian Serbian historiography in general (defined above) as well as in issues related to the change of authority in 1918.²⁶ As one argument I present the attitude of author Ljiljana Aleksić-Pejković that repeats and confirms the validity of the foreign policy of the "restored Serbia," whose aim was the liberation and unification of the Serbian people in one sovereign state. The plans for Bosnia and Herzegovina, "which have always been regarded as Serbian lands, because the Serbian people in them were in the majority, were a function of the general liberation campaign":

In World War I...besides the defense and national liberation of the occupied territories, the only war aim of Serbia, which Serbian allies did not deny in any moment and completely supported, whether there was talk about a "big" Yugoslav or a "small" Serbia, was a solution of the national question.... Final national liberation and unification with Serbia, Bosnia, and Herzegovina was achieved within the pan-Serb and Yugoslav solution at the end of the First World War.²⁷

In proving the Serbian character of Bosnia and Herzegovina by using the "Serbian majority" among the Bosnian population this historiographical circle used the method of the negation of the Bosniak nation and the uniqueness of Bosniak Muslims, emphasizing their "artificial" construction.²⁸ Other publications of authors who belong to that circle or follow its ideas also do not question the main theses of the basic

character of the Austro-Hungarian rule, creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, and the ostensibly Serbian character of Bosnia and Herzegovina.²⁹

The time just before the dissolution of the common Yugoslav state represents the beginning of the independence and separation of Bosnian historiography. On the one hand this process had a positive side, but on the other it also had negative consequences. In my own view, which involves a critical review of the earlier interpretations based on a recognized methodology, this process certainly had a positive aspect. Time has allowed the acceptance and popularity of a wide range of intellectuals and semi-intellectuals in the society, but the academic and objective character of their writings is suspect. They tend to represent nationalist agendas and a sense of victimization. Fortunately some individuals, groups, and institutions seek to analyze this important issue in the new circumstances from a more academic perspective, although the political context has a visible impact on most of them.

As a result of the dissolution of Yugoslavia and Serbia's role in the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina the view of the positive character of the replacement of Austro-Hungarian rule in Bosnia and Herzegovina by Yugoslav/Serbian authority was rethought and revised. 31 The final sharp break with the earlier Serbian attitude was caused by the reality of the war. 32 This included the systematic war crimes carried out by Serbian forces against the Bosnian civilian population, especially against Bosniak Muslims.³³ Now the focus is on consideration of the consequences of these changes for Bosnia and Herzegovina as a political and social entity, and especially for the Bosniak Muslims. In these new circumstances the Yugoslav government does not seem very superior to the Austro-Hungarian administration. Nor was the Kingdom of Serbs, Slovenes, and Croats particularly enlightened or attuned to the fulfillment of the wishes of the non-Serb populations.³⁴ As the historian Ibrahim Karabegović concluded: "During the War, there were several concepts of unification; however,...Regent Alexander succeeded in imposing the concept of unification that was most suitable for Serbia."35 Historian Vera Katz added that from its early beginning the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes did not fulfill expectations of national-political elites from South Slavic countries.36

In the revised assessment of the character and fairness of the first Yugoslavia it is possible to identify three groups in Bosnian-Herzegovinian historiography. These groups were formed spontaneously and are the result of several individual attitudes toward the issue. In the first group we

can see the dominant political/ideological influence. This group does not necessarily revise the former attitude through new research and sometimes offers no serious analysis of the positions and arguments in the earlier dominant historiography. The unequivocal position of this broad group composed of intellectuals of different profiles (including philosophers of history, historians, historians of law, and political scientists) basically considers Serbia, the Serbian national ideology, and the Serbian people as a whole the main culprit for the suffering of Bosniaks. In the continuity of Serbian crime (some of them use the term "genocide") against Bosniaks they very often include numerous killings and violence (political, economic, and spiritual) after the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (later the Kingdom of Yugoslavia). Thus this state is perceived as negative and oppressive toward non-Serbs.³⁷ Like the negative Serb evaluation of the Ottoman Empire and Austria-Hungarian monarchy, Bosniaks emphasize their bad position in comparison with the Serbs and Orthodoxy.

Another rather small group, mostly composed of historians and led by Safet Bandžović and Muhidin Pelesić, has made a detailed analysis of the positions and arguments in the earlier dominant historiography. They occasionally do new research. The published results of this group show that its primary aim is not the comparison of the Yugoslav-Serbian to Austro-Hungarian authority but above all the negation of the earlier dominant and one-sided attitude of Serbian historiography.³⁸ These historians have concluded that Serbian historiography glorified the Serbian-Yugoslav political objective, finally realized by the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes.

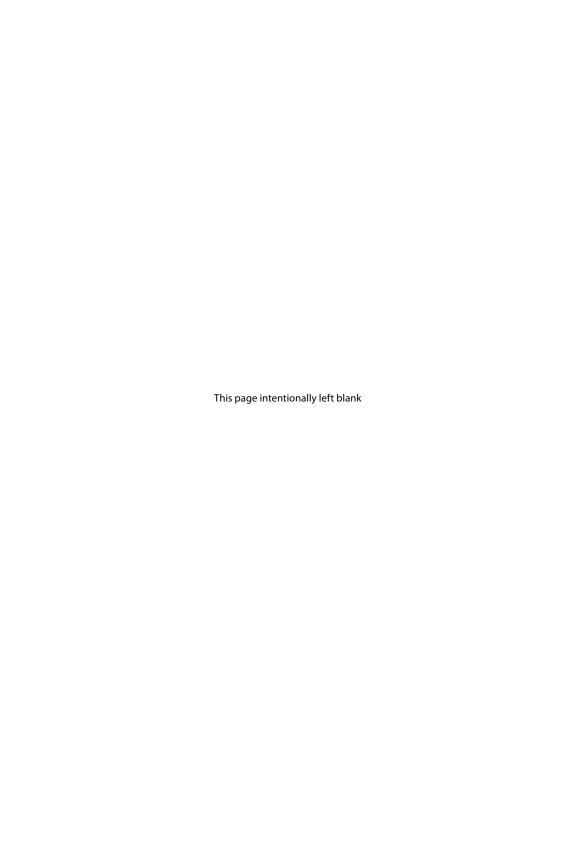
The third group, also rather small, is composed exclusively of historians. The focus of their archival research is all the groups of the Bosnian population (Bosniaks perhaps more than the others). The earlier idealized image of the change to better times for Bosnia and its peoples (related to the end of Austro-Hungarian rule and the beginning of Serbian/Serb-Yugoslav rule in 1918) has changed.³⁹ Although these historians do not perform a detailed analysis of the attitude and arguments in the earlier dominant historiography, their published results contribute to the unsustainability of the Serbian historiographic interpretations as an absolute truth.

NOTES

- For examples, see Dragoslav Janković, ed. The Historiography of Yugoslavia, 1965– 1975, 343–70; and Branko Petranović, Istorija Jugoslavije.
- 2. See major reviews of Bosnian historiography until 2002: Janković, *The Historiography of Yugoslavia*, 324–39; Nedim Filipović, ed., *Savjetovanje o istoriografiji Bosne i Hercegovine (1945–1982)*, 37–77; Dušan Berić, "Bosna i Hercegovina od kraja XVIII veka do 1914 u najnovijoj jugoslovenskoj istoriografiji," 183–200; Zijad Šehić, "Historiografska literatura o Bosni i Hercegovini u austrougarskoj epohi (1878–1918) objavljena u zemlji i inozemstvu posljednje dvije decenije (1980–1998)"; Enver Redžić, ed., *Istorijska nauka o Bosni i Hercegovini u razdoblju*, 1990–2000.
- Ferdo Hauptamann, "Privreda i društvo Bosne i Hercegovine u doba austrougarske vladavine (1878–1918)."
- See the review of Bosnian-Herzegovinian historiography on World War I written by Zijad Šehić: Usmrt za cara i domovinu, 7–9.
- 5. Many books and articles are devoted to this famous assassination.
- Robert J. Donia, Islam under the Double Eagle; Noel Malcolm, Bosnia; Robert J.
 Donia and John V. A. Fine Jr., Bosnia and Herzegovina; Ladislav Hladky, Bosna a
 Hercegovina; Marko Attila Hoare, The History of Bosnia.
- 7. Hamdija Kapidžić, "Austro-ugarska politika u Bosni i Hercegovini i jugoslovensko pitanje za vrijeme Prvog svjetskog rata"; Luka Đaković, Položaj Bosne i Hercegovine u austrougarskim koncepcijama rješenja jugoslovenskog pitanja 1914–1918; Milorad Ekmečić, Ratni ciljevi Srbije 1914; Galib Šljivo, ed., Veleizdajnički proces u Banja Luci, 1915–1916; Nusret Šehić, Bosna i Hercegovina, 1918–1925.
- 8. For the domination of Serbian historiography (and policy) over Bosnia and Herzegovina, see Muhidin Pelesić, "Manipulacije srpske historiografije o Bosni i Hercegovini," 382, 385.
- Tomislav Kraljačić, Kalajev režim u Bosni i Hercegovini, 1882–1903; Hauptamann, "Privreda i društvo Bosne i Hercegovine"; Dževad Juzbašić, Politika i privreda u Bosni i Hercegovini pod austrougarskom upravom; Iljas Hadžibegović, Bosanskohercegovački gradovi na razmeđu 19. i 20. stoljeća.
- 10. Muhamed Filipović, ed., Socijalistička Republika Bosna i Hercegovina.
- 11. See the interesting article by Ivo Banac on the dissolution of Yugoslav historiography, taken from his book *Cijena Bosne*: Ivo Banac, "Rat prije rata"; see also Husnija Kamberović, ed., *Revizija prošlosti na prostorima bivše Jugoslavije*.
- 12. Ekmečić expresses a palpable fear of Serb polycentrism, significantly present in the Serbian history of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. He also appears as a major opponent of such a tendency.
- 13. Four issues of this journal have been published from 2009 until now.
- 14. See the list of publications of the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Eastern Sarajevo (http://www.ffuis.edu.ba/category/84/) as well as the journal *Radovi Filozofskog Fakulteta* (Univerzitet u Istočnom Sarajevu) (http://www.ffuis.edu.ba/-radovi/).
- 15. As an example, see Đorđe Mikić, "Vojislav Šola." He concluded that Šola "was among the first to start awakening people's sleepy spirits, people's consciousness,

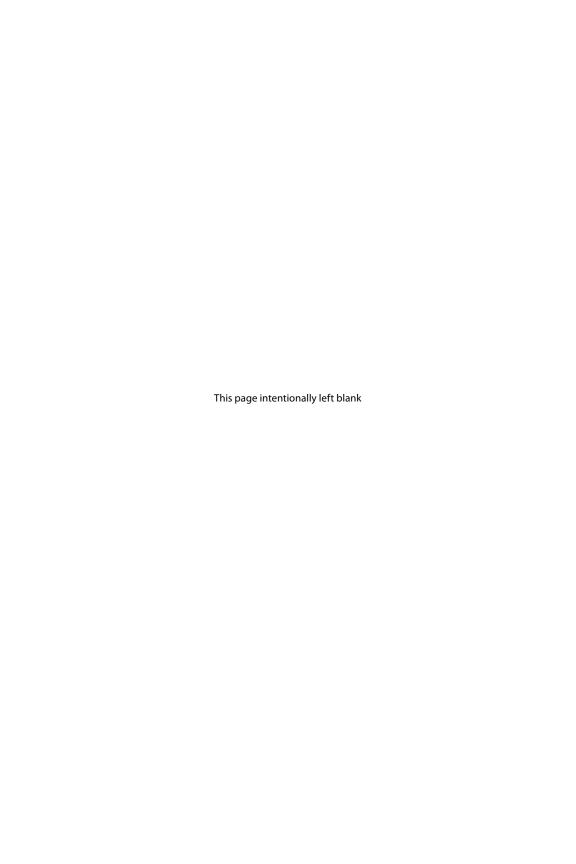
- and started to prepare new generation for liberation from powerful Austria" (ibid., 226); see also Angelika Kos, "Srpski dnevnik Danila Medakovića kao svjedok promjena u Bosni i Hercegovini"; Nikola Žutić, "Rimokoatoličenje Srba i prodor hrvatstva u Bosnu i Hercegovinu, 1878–1914"; Marijana Todorović Bilić, "Austrougarska kolonizacija u Bosni i Hercegovini"; Zoran S. Mačkić, "Uroš Stevanović"; Danka Damjanović, "Dom kralja Petra Velikog Oslobodioca u Banjaluci."
- 16. See the major works of Milorad Ekmečić, Ustanak u Bosni, 1875–1878; Ratni ciljevi Srbije 1914; Stvaranje Jugoslavije, 1790–1918; "Uticaji balkanskih ratova na društvo u Bosni i Hercegovini"; and Dugo kretanje između klanja i oranja. In particular see idem, Stvaranje Jugoslavije, 2:832–33.
- 17. Maja Miljković, "Beogradski istoriografski krugovi i problem nacionalnog sagledavanja fenomena nacionalnog interesa na kraju 20 veka," 332–33.
- 18. Milorad Ekmečić, "Predgovor"; Miljković, "Beogradski istoriografski krugovi," 332.
- Ekmečić, "Predgovor."
- M. Ekmečić, Radovi iz istorije Bosne i Hercegovine 19. veka, 9 (quotation);
 Miljković, "Beogradski istoriografski krugovi," 334.
- 21. Foreword in *Zbornik za Istoriju Bosne i Hercegovine*, 1; Miljković, "Beogradski istoriografski krugovi," 332.
- 22. Ranka Gašić, "Srbobran (1903–1914) o Bosni i Hercegovini"; Vladimir Stojančević, "O problematici proučavanja istorije srpskog naroda u Bosni"; Đorđe Mikić, "Akcija Vase Pelagića i bosanskohercegovačkih izbjeglica protiv austrougarske okupacije"; Mile Stanić, "Progon srpskih sveštenika u Bosni 1914. godine"; Jelena Milojković-Đurić, "Kulturna politika Austro-Ugarske monarhije u Bosni i Hercegovini posle Berlinskog sporazuma"; Maša Miloradović, "Građa za bibliografiju o Bosni i Hercegovini"; Đorđe Mikić, "Balkanska kriza 1912–1913 godine i Bosanska Krajina"; Velibor Buha, "Jedan pogled na značaj nemačke politike u aneksionoj krizi 1908–1909"; Aleksandar Rastović, "Englezi o umešanosti Srbije u Sarajevski atentat."
- 23. Gašić, "Srbobran," 248.
- 24. Mikić, "Balkanska kriza 1912–1913," 205, 211 (lowercase *m*), 222.
- 25. Rastović, "Englezi o umešanosti Srbije u Sarajevski atentat," 270-71.
- 26. See Milorad Ekmečić, "O istraživanju istorije Bosne i Hercegovine danas," 13–29.
- 27. Ljiljana Aleksić-Pejković, "Bosna i Hercegovina u spoljnopolitičkim planovima Srbije," 331, 345.
- Slavenko Terzić, "Reč na otvaranju skupa," 9; Safet Bandžović, "Etničkohistoriografski stereotipi i sintetičke nacije," 82; Ekmečić, "O istraživanju istorije Bosne i Hercegovine danas," 13–29.
- 29. As a most evident example, see Milorad Ekmečić, ed., *Aneksija Bosne i Hercegovine povodom stote godišnjice*.
- 30. An independent Bosnian historiography puts Bosnia-Herzegovina and the views of the Bosniak Muslims more in focus. See Husnija Kamberović, ed., Rasprave o nacionalnom identitetu Bošnjaka; Zijad Šehić, ed., Međunarodna konferencija; Husnija Kamberović, ed., Identitet Bosne i Hercegovine kroz historiju. Also, some historians have not changed their own attitudes and methodology in research on the Bosnian past. They systematically work on quite specific topics of Bosnian history under Austro-Hungarian rule without a clear comparison to the period of

- the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. As an example, see Juzbašić, *Politika i privreda u Bosni i Hercegovini*; and idem, "Die österreichisch-ungarische Okkupationsverwaltung in Bosnien-Herzegowina."
- 31. New characteristics of Bosnian historiography are also visible in its research on World War I: Šehić, "Historiografska literatura o Bosni i Hercegovini u austrougarskoj epohi (1878–1918)"; idem, "Bibliografija"; Husnija Kamberović, Novije tendencije u historiografiji u Bosni i Hercegovini. Analysis of the most prominent historiographic journal in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Prilozi) shows quite considerable interest in the prewar history and history of Bosnia and Herzegovina in World War I. Kamberović, Novije tendencije u historiografiji u Bosni i Hercegovini, 4–5.
- 32. See Ibrahim Karabegović, ed., Bosna i Hercegovina od najstarijih vremena do kraja Drugog svjetskog rata.
- 33. See "Genocid u Republici Bosni i Hercegovini 1992."
- 34. See papers presented at three conferences: "Sarajevo 1914. godine"; "Godina 1918: Bosanskohercegovačko iskustvo"; Međunarodna konferencija Bosna i Hercegovina u okviru Austro-Ugarske, 1878–1918 (Sarajevo: Filozofski Fakultet u Sarajevu, 2011).
- 35. Ibrahim Karabegović, "Kraljevina Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca," 14-15.
- 36. Vera Katz, "Hrvati u Bosni i Hercegovini prema ujedinjenju 1918. godine," 107.
- 37. See the articles by Muhamed Filipović ("On the Issue of Genocide", 15–22) and Mustafa Imamović ("On Genocide," 23–27) in "Genocid u Republici Bosni i Hercegovini 1992"; Šaćir Filandra, *Bošnjačka politika u XX stoljeću*; Mustafa Imamović, Kemal Hrelja and Atif Purivatra, *Ekonomski genocid nad bosanskim Muslimanima* (Sarajevo: MAG—Udruženje Muslimana za Antigenocidne Aktivnosti, 1992); and Mustafa Imamović, *Historija Bošnjaka*.
- 38. Safet Bandžović, "Bošnjaci u postjugoslovenskoj srpskoj historiografiji"; idem, "Etničko-historiografski stereotipi i sintetičke nacije"; idem, Iseljavanje Bošnjaka u Tursku; idem, "Demografska deosmanizacija Balkana krajem XIX i početkom XX stoljoća"; idem, "Iseljenička politika balkanskih država i pitanje muslimana (1878–1941)"; idem, "Demografska deosmanizacija Balkana i kretanja bosansko-hercegovačkih muhadžira (1878–1914)"; Muhidin Pelesić, "Manipulacije srpske historiografije o Bosni i Hercegovini"; idem, "Bošnjački političari u prevratnom vremenu sloma Imperije i rođenja Kraljevine," Godina 1918: Bosanskohercegovačko iskustvo, (January 2008): 51–90;
- 39. Šehić, Usmrt za cara i domovinu; Husnija Kamberović, Begovski zemljišni posjedi u Bosni i Hercegovini od 1878 do 1918 godine; idem, Hod po trnju; Adnan Jahić, Islamska zajednica u Bosni i Hercegovini za vrijeme monarhističke Jugoslavije (1918–1941); Tomislav Išek, Mjesto i uloga HKD Napredak u kulturnom životu Hrvata Bosne i Hercegovine (1902–1918); Seka Brkljača, "Politika prema bosanskohercegovačkim opštinama i opštine prema politici u Kraljevini Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca"; idem, "Teritorijalne samouprave u Kraljevini Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca."



PART VI

Arab Provinces of the Ottoman Empire



The Arab Provinces of the Ottoman Empire before, during, and after World War I

From Muslim Empire to Colonial States

Peter Sluglett

While World War I brought about the end of the Ottoman Empire, a relatively small proportion of the population of the Arab provinces actively sought that goal or participated in the events that led up to it, at least until the Balkan Wars of 1912-13. The end of the empire meant that "Ottomanism" was no longer a political option, but little evidence indicates the existence of anything that might be described as an Arab independence movement of any numerical significance before (and even during) the war. This is hardly surprising: politically aware Ottoman Arabs would have known that France had occupied or otherwise colonized Algeria in 1830, Tunisia in 1881, and Morocco (not of course part of the empire) in 1912; that Italy had embarked on a brutal campaign of conquest in Cyrenaica, Fezzan, and Tripolitania at the end of 1911; and that Britain had occupied Egypt in 1882. Hence the notion that "the [Ottoman] Empire, for most Muslims and even some Christians, was simply seen as the only remaining political force capable of forestalling European colonial ambitions" seems to have had considerable resonance until its defeat in 1918.²

A movement, mostly in Greater Syria, did indeed call for greater provincial autonomy and decentralization (*la-markaziya*) within the empire, but this only dated from about 1910–11. Ottoman rule in the Arab world collapsed because of the military campaigns of the Allies (certainly assisted by some 10,000 troops in the Arab Revolt),³ not as the culmination of a widely supported nationalist campaign that had been in active

existence for many years. Although this is not quite the same point, it is certainly the case that the local leaderships that emerged in the various former Arab provinces after 1918 were for most part utterly unprepared for and ill-equipped to deal with the end of four centuries of Ottoman rule. Furthermore, on a more popular level, there are many examples of large-scale demonstrations in the major cities between 1908 and 1914 in favor of the empire and against attacks upon it by the various European powers.

In addition the empire's legacy survived largely intact for several decades in much of the bureaucratic, educational, and legal systems and police and military organization in its successor Arab states. And of course it survived in a more lively manner in the persons of the administrators and politicians of these states, many of whom had known each other in their student days in the imperial law school, the Ottoman military colleges, and other institutions in Istanbul.⁴ In spite of British and French efforts to stigmatize the empire as corrupt, backward, and inefficient in order to justify their "liberation" of the Arab provinces during and after World War I,5 the late nineteenth century Ottoman Empire (with the exception of some of its remoter provinces) was not especially static, stagnant, or backward—perhaps in comparison to northwestern Europe but probably not in comparison to Colombia, Mexico, Portugal or Spain. Thus "by the beginning of the twentieth century, more than half a million Ottoman civil servants managed activities commonly associated with nation states, from the administration of hospitals to the construction and maintenance of essential infrastructure." 6 Similarly Rashid Khalidi notes that "the mandate regimes in the Middle East had the specific characteristic...that they took over from a relatively strong, relatively modern state—the late Ottoman Empire."7

In addition to its at least relative modernity, and however else we might characterize it, the Ottoman Empire of the nineteenth century was a multicultural and multiethnic state, in which ethnicity was not a widely accepted marker of identity. About two-thirds of the inhabitants of the Balkans were Christian, but they remained mostly loyally Ottoman until around mid-century. The Arab provinces of the empire had an even greater degree of homogeneity: only about 10 percent of the population as a whole was non-Muslim (with larger percentages of non-Muslims in the bigger cities such as Aleppo, Baghdad, Damascus, and Mosul). Also, although universally accepted barriers prevented unfettered social contact between members of the various religions and sects, a fair degree of residential integration and heterogeneity seems to have existed. Thus

Heinz Gaube and Eugen Wirth's tables for the population of Aleppo at the beginning of the twentieth century show that out of the ninety-nine quarters of the old city, fifty were entirely Muslim, one was 91 percent Jewish, eighteen were more than 80 percent Christian, and the remaining thirty were more thoroughly mixed. The population as a whole lived under a common regime of Islamic law dispensed in the Shari^ca courts, in which Christians and Jews would sue Muslims, and perhaps even more significantly sue each other, and win or lose in dispensations that were broadly accepted as fair interpretations of the law. This general harmony was shattered from time to time by sectarian clashes in the course of the nineteenth century, but many of these incidents seem to have had socioeconomic as much as "religious" origins. The population of the nineteenth century, but many of these incidents seem to have had socioeconomic as much as "religious" origins.

It seems unlikely that a significant proportion of the urban population of Greater Syria (or Iraq) around 1900 thought of itself as Arab (still less as Syrian, Suri), but people often had a sense of common urban origin, as the frequency of such last names as Dimashqi, Halabi, and Homsi (often for Christians) suggests. Again the depth of any shared sense of Ottomanism (osmanlılık), is also difficult to gauge. But descriptions of various incidents in the period immediately before World War I seem to indicate a fairly high level of "moral investment" in the Ottoman status quo. For example, in many cities in the Arab provinces the seizure of power by the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) in 1908-9 was greeted with large and supportive demonstrations as signifying the dawn of a new era.¹³ The Ottoman Empire, it was hoped, would be able to take its rightful place as a member of the club of "modern nations" and would be able to enjoy the full benefit of the rights promised under the Ottoman Constitution of 1876 (which Abdülhamid II had suspended in 1878).

Thus some two weeks after the restoration of the constitution in Istanbul the Aleppo-born Andrea Marcopoli, Italian banker, commission agent, importer of European goods, wool and leather merchant, and Portuguese consul in Aleppo since 1866, wrote to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Lisbon that the "establishment of the constitutional regime has been welcomed enthusiastically by the local population." In time, of course, the Turkification policies adopted by the CUP became increasingly unattractive to the population of the Arab provinces. But even then in Aleppo, as in many other Arab cities, news of the Italian annexation of Tripolitania (1911) and of the major Ottoman defeats in the two Balkan Wars (1912–13, 1913) occasioned large *pro-Ottoman* demonstrations. In Nablus the announcement on November 5, 1914, that the

Ottomans had entered the war on the side of the Central Powers caused a large crowd to gather outside the mansion of the Nimr family: "In a resounding voice they all chanted 'God give victory to the Prince of the Muslims our Sultan." Finally, in spite of its complex and often acrimonious relationship with the Ottoman administration, the Shiite clerical leadership in the 'atabat (Holy Cities of Iraq) unhesitatingly rallied to the Ottoman banner from the very beginning of World War I, instinctively choosing the Ottomans over their would-be British "liberators." ¹⁸

There are other examples of such attitudes. For instance, the historian Muhammad Raghib al-Tabbakh's description of the career of 'Abd al-Rahman al-Kawakibi (1849–1903), often considered a proto-Arab nationalist, whose best-known writings call for the (re)establishment of an Arab caliphate, throws an interesting light on the sociopolitical realities of his day.¹⁹ Perhaps the most distinguished Aleppo man of letters in the late nineteenth century, al-Kawakibi began his career working as a journalist on government newspapers. He became editor of the imperial newspapers al-Furat and al-Shahba' as well as occupying a number of other official positions in the city and the province for most of his life. He left Aleppo for Cairo in 1898, but this was after a quarrel between himself and the vali Arif Paşa (in the course of which he complained to Istanbul about the vali's misdeeds) rather than because of any sustained anti-Ottoman activities. Nor does it seem that al-Kawakibi founded any kind of radical movement. Hourani points out that some of his animus against Abdülhamid was due to the sultan's promotion of his favorite Abu'l-Huda al-Sayyadi to the position of nagib al-ashraf of Aleppo, a post that al-Kawakibi thought should be more properly entrusted to one of his own relatives.²⁰ Al-Kawakibi was imprisoned briefly in 1886 after an unsuccessful attempt on the life of the vali Jamil Paşa (it is not clear in what way he was involved or alleged to be involved). He had previously sent telegrams to Istanbul complaining about Jamil's hostility and ill-treatment of his own family and of the Jabiri, Katkhuda, and Bakur families. Given al-Kawakibi's later history it is significant that these complaints are couched in terms of "if only the king knew the crimes that his servants are committing in his name" and do not challenge the legitimacy of Ottoman rule.21

In the context of the *nahda* (Arab literary renaissance), which began around the 1860s, the self/other dichotomy was primarily the Arabs visà-vis the West rather than the Arabs vis-à-vis the Ottomans.²² Thus, while al-Kawakibi believed both that the Turks had corrupted the caliphate and that the Arabs were uniquely placed to save Islam from further decay,

his writings focus much more on the need for reform in Islam than on anything that might be called the national interests of the Arabs vis-àvis the Ottomans.²³ Speaking of the young journalist 'Abd al-Ghani al-'Uraisi, editor of the Beirut newspaper *al-Mufid* and one of the "martyrs" subsequently hanged by the Ottoman authorities under Cemal Paşa in May 1916, Rashid Khalidi says:

In spite of [their] outspoken convictions, al-'Uraisi and most of his fellow-nationalists do not seem to have wanted to renounce all links with the Turks and the Ottoman Empire—certainly not before late 1913.... [Al-'Uraisi wrote in an editorial on May 8, 1911]: "It is a lie that there is a misunderstanding between Arabs and Turks: there is a family discussion over some of the national bonds which join them." ²⁴

"ARABISM" IN GREATER SYRIA BEFORE WORLD WAR I

In spite of attempts by both near contemporaries and later ideologues to describe the process differently,²⁵ it does not seem to be the case that a significant number of the inhabitants of the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire at the end of the nineteenth century had long harbored the desire to throw off the "Ottoman yoke" and rule themselves independently of Istanbul.²⁶ It is also wrong to believe that these supposedly disgruntled Arab citizens had a clear vision of a pristine pre-Ottoman Arab past to which they yearned to return after having liberated themselves from the Ottomans. It is true that for a brief period (perhaps from about AD 700 to about AD 900) the greater part of the Arab world had formed a single political entity, first under the Umayyads and then under the early Abbasids. Around the end of the tenth century, however, the Arab world became divided into territories that sometimes did and sometimes did not prefigure modern political divisions,²⁷ ruled by a number of different dynasties of either local (for example, Moroccan) or external (for example, Turkish or Mamluk) origin. Of course the existence of political disunity and diversity did not prevent the growth of a distinctive "Arab-Islamic" culture and civilization based on a common language and religion, with various local and regional variations. This process was in many ways comparable to the development of medieval Western European "Christian" civilization, also based on a common literary and liturgical language, with distinctive local and regional variations. Hence the notion of Arab

unity, which is an entirely modern invention, exists more as a moral imperative than as a distinct part of a lively folk memory. Except during a fairly limited period it cannot be regarded as historical fact, however unsubtly it has been presented to generations of Arab schoolchildren since the 1920s.

The myth has been so persistent, however, that it is worth spending a little more time trying to demolish it. In *Nations and Nationalism* (published in 1990) Eric Hobsbawm remarked: "Nationalism requires too much belief in what is patently not so" and went on to quote Ernest Renan's *Qu'est-ce que c'est une nation?*: "L'oubli, et je dirai même l'erreur historique, sont un facteur essential de la formation d'une nation, et c'est ainsi que le progrès des études historiques est souvent pour la nationalité un danger."²⁸

One stubbornly held belief in what is patently not so in the Arab world is the notion that British and French imperialism simply replaced four centuries of Ottoman imperialism, division, and despotism in the immediate aftermath of World War I and that the liberation of the Arabs, which had been their primary goal for "generations," was forcibly postponed for another half century or so. It can legitimately be postulated that European colonial or quasi-colonial rule retarded Arab development. But it is as inaccurate to view the Ottoman Empire as just another variant of imperialism as it is to project the Arab national struggle against the Ottomans very much earlier than the beginning of the twentieth century.

Nationalism took some time to reach the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire, for two main interconnected reasons. First, the peoples of the empire generally conceived of identity in religious rather than ethnic terms. Second, most of the Arabs were Sunni Muslims, as were the rulers of the empire and the empire's more senior provincial representatives. Hence notions of oppressive rule by alien rulers are anachronistic. While Arab peasants certainly complained about Ottoman rule, the complaints were about excessive taxation and corruption rather than about the different ethnicity of their oppressors. Local administration was generally carried out by local people, so it seems prima facie unlikely, for instance, that ordinary villagers would have been able to conceive of the situation in these terms. Ideas of ethnolinguistic nationalism and selfdetermination, encouraged by Russia and Austria-Hungary, had indeed surfaced in southeastern Europe in the nineteenth century in Greece, in parts of (what was then still to become but is now former) Yugoslavia, and in what is now Bulgaria and Romania. These territories acquired independence from the empire at various times in the nineteenth century.

But even there Ottoman habits and practices died hard, with little in the way of sustained anti-Ottoman or anti-Muslim feeling much before these events.²⁹

The Arab provinces, in contrast, provide very little evidence of such national sentiment. In addition to hastening the advent of modernity, the major administrative, legal, and educational reforms put in place by the Ottomans generally had the effect of bolstering and sometimes helping to create powerful groups in the provinces with strong ties to Istanbul.³⁰

The social and political conservatism of Sultan Abdülhamid II (1875–1909), together with the very real advantages that urban provincial notables derived from supporting him, meant that opposition to his rule was largely confined to those who rejected despotism and yearned for political freedom and to a growing number of ulema for whom the sultan's enthusiastic pan-Islamism was an inadequate substitute for more thoroughgoing Islamic reform. In consequence the seizure of power by the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) in the course of the Young Turk revolution in 1908, which was greeted with such enthusiasm by the populations of the cities of Greater Syria, was received with far less enthusiasm by the notables, who could see the dangers to which the actual application of notions like liberty and equality might expose them.

WORLD WAR I AND THE RISE OF ARABISM

In the course of World War I a number of circumstances combined to foster the rise of Arab national consciousness on a very much wider scale than before. First, the CUP's fairly wholehearted embrace of ethnic Turkish nationalism had made itself felt in the Arab provinces between about 1911 and 1914, and calls for decentralization (greater provincial autonomy) were more frequently expressed. Second, for much of the period between 1914 and 1918, a combination of Ottoman requisitioning and the Allied blockade of the Syrian coast caused terrible shortages, producing famine conditions, in much of Greater Syria. This was compounded by the harsh rule of the commander of the Ottoman 4th Army, Cemal Paşa, and especially by his approval of the execution of eleven individuals accused of being supporters of Arab independence in Beirut in August 1915 and a further twenty-one in Beirut and Damascus in May 1916 (including 'Abd al-Ghani al-'Uraisi, quoted above).

Another factor was the British concoction of the quixotic scheme known as the Arab Revolt in 1915, for reasons that are still not entirely clear. In their promotion of the Hashemite cause in 1915 the British in many ways were backing the wrong horse, at least to the extent that they believed that they were tapping into a rich vein of potentially anti-Turkish sentiment. This notion was largely a figment of the imagination of a few "professionally anti-Ottoman" British intelligence enthusiasts, who had many years of field experience in "Arabia." 32 Some of these individuals also managed to convince their superiors in Cairo and London that Sharif Husayn (the Ottoman viceroy in the Hijaz) and his family were members of a kind of Muslim aristocracy that was widely respected throughout the Arab and Muslim worlds-which was not, to say the least, actually the case.³³ Even the most diehard proponents of the notion that the Arab nationalist movement had deep historical roots cannot gloss over the lack of widespread manifestations of anti-Ottoman sentiment (let alone the potential for an anti-Ottoman or pro-Hashemite revolt) in wartime Syria or for that matter in wartime Iraq, where such displays would obviously have received either covert or overt British backing.34

Although the revolt initially failed to generate widespread support, however, the capture of Damascus by the Sharifian army led by Husayn's son Faysal in October 1918 (albeit under circumstances that may have been somewhat less heroic than they were made to seem at the time) did arouse widespread excitement and enthusiasm, and of course by this time Ottoman power had definitively collapsed.³⁵ But here again things turn out not to have been quite as Arab nationalist historians have subsequently made them out to be. Recent studies of post-1918 Syria have challenged the hitherto fairly widespread assumption that Faysal and his "Arab government," most of whose officials were from Iraq, were universally welcomed by the people of Syria. While rejoicing in the end of four years of wartime privations, many Syrians would have preferred to be ruled by one of their own rather than by an unknown quantity: a British-sponsored outsider from the Hijaz who commanded an army officered by Iraqis and manned by tribal riffraff.³⁶ This raises the question of exactly what Arab unity meant at this point in history.

The experience of the war for the inhabitants of the Iraqi provinces was very different from the experience of the population of Greater Syria. First, the campaign in Iraq had started some three years earlier.³⁷ The Mesopotamia Expeditionary Force landed at Fao in November 1914, while the Egyptian Expeditionary Force only crossed the Sinai in the autumn of 1917, capturing Jerusalem in December. Initially British Indian forces advanced almost unopposed through southern Iraq, but they were checked at Kut. Only after major reinforcements were brought

in and operational command was transferred from Delhi to London was Baghdad captured in March 1917. The people of Iraq did not suffer the terrible shortages experienced by their contemporaries in Syria. But by the time the war ended in the autumn of 1918 much of Iraq had been under thoroughgoing British-Indian military and civil administration for about four years. In contrast, Gen. Edmund Allenby's civil administration of Syria was fairly rudimentary until the end of the war, after which it functioned in a somewhat uneasy partnership with Faysal's Arab kingdom. The British eventually withdrew from Syria under French pressure in the autumn of 1919. It was only at that point that the French, who were to be awarded the mandate for Syria and Lebanon in April 1920 by the League of Nations (which gave the mandates for Iraq and Palestine to Britain on the same occasion), sent an army of occupation to Syria, eventually defeating Faysal and his supporters at the Battle of Maysalun in July 1920. Thus both Greater Syria and Iraq became arenas for the fulfillment of European colonial ambitions. The inhabitants of these regions were confused about what their ultimate fate might be by the imperial designs of Britain and France, their mutual suspicions, and the long debate in both Britain and France as to whether either country or both should be spending large amounts of money garrisoning the Middle East instead of building "homes fit for heroes" (a phrase attributed to David Lloyd George). A series of tensions also arose within the small cadres of politically engaged Arabs over the relative merits of a united Syria, a separate Palestine, Syria, and Iraq, and so forth.

ARABISM IN ALEPPO: ELEMENTS OF A CASE STUDY

Although we can plot out the rise of Arab sentiment in central and southern Syria, it is difficult to be equally confident about the process of the emergence of such trends in Aleppo. The question of Aleppo's Arab loyalties was more complex for several reasons, including its geographical location straddling both sides of what is now the frontier between Syria and Turkey, its long-standing economic linkages with southern Anatolia and northern Iraq, and its ethnically mixed (Arab/Kurdish/Turkish) population. Like the rather fanciful maps in the atlases of my childhood that purported to show the northern limits of the olive tree in Europe, the northern limit of Arabic speakers/southern limit of Turkish speakers in the borderlands between "Syria" and "Turkey" cannot really be plotted with any accuracy. Indeed "the territory in the northern part of Syria and of the highlands of Iraq, which became the place of encounter for Arabic,

Turkic, Persian and Kurdish tribes, was a checkerboard of varying languages and social organizations." At the beginning of the twentieth century a large number of those bringing cases before the mahkama shari 'yya (law court) in Aleppo originated from (or resided in: the distinction is not always clear) villages or small towns well to the north of the present Syrian/Turkish boundary. Many of the cases, especially (ironically) those involving Armenians, were conducted in Turkish. The strength and importance of these Turkish connections is still evident in the survival of numerous surnames or family names from these areas and of quite a lot of Turkish vocabulary in contemporary Aleppo. It is important to be aware of the general cultural atmosphere of the last years of Ottoman rule in this area to avoid falling too readily into the kind of anachronism so beloved of Arab nationalist writers. In addition late nineteenth century Ottoman policies of settling or pacifying the desert frontier, revivifying abandoned villages, and generally creating "new lands" provided new opportunities for enrichment for the "Aleppo Muslim elite," whose interests were now "further [tied]...to those of the Ottoman regime. The new lands had made many of them wealthy and the state provided patronage in the form of government positions that they were happy to accept. In the twilight of the empire, Aleppo produced no rebels."40

I am not aware of any systematic study of the beginnings of the Arab national movement in Aleppo. Neither of the two chroniclers of the city in the late Ottoman period (al-Tabbakh and al-Ghazzi) seems to have had a highly developed sense of local identity or identification. They published their books in the 1920s, long after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, so they no longer had to maintain a respectful attitude toward the Ottoman state (if they had ever had to do so). Neither represents his contemporaries as "we Aleppines" versus the "Ottoman other." Both write of the Ottoman state and its servants in the last years of its existence as if this was the natural order of things. Al-Tabbakh ends his history with the Young Turk revolution, while al-Ghazzi continues his until 1920. I found an early indication of a sense of Arab identity in another report of Consul Marcopoli early in 1909:

Encouraged by the example of the Committee of Union and Progress, founded by the Young Turks, the Arab party [*le parti arabe*] for its part has just formed an Arab association, which already has more than a thousand members. Since the Ottoman officials have generally been chosen from among the Turkish element until now, the Arab population, it is said, wishes to abolish

any partiality between the different races and to introduce Arabs into the administration in proportion to their number in the population as a whole.⁴²

Of course we have no idea of what the thousand members of the Arab party did, still less how seriously they needed to be taken as an entity. In the most detailed account of the prewar "Arab movement" only three of the fifty-one supporters of the "Arab cause" whom Ernest Dawn lists as active before 1914 were from Aleppo: Albayr Himsi, Rushdi al-Shama', and 'Abd al-Wahhab al-Muyassir. 43

ALEPPO IN 1918

The economic as well as the political situation of Aleppo changed very radically after World War I. The immediate impact of the war and its aftermath on the economy of Aleppo and indeed of Syria as a whole was devastating. It was reported from Aleppo in April 1918 that between four hundred and five hundred people were dying of starvation every day.⁴⁴ Long-distance trade (with Anatolia and northern Iraq) had virtually ceased, and moneylenders were unable to call in their loans. Some landowning merchant-moneylenders took advantage of the peasants' desperate need for food, which had become more acute because of Ottoman requisitions of grain and animals throughout the war, to acquire peasant land. Thus for many of the inhabitants of northern Syria the imposition of the mandate had the effect of bringing a state of acute insecurity to an end to some extent, but major political and economic questions long remained unanswered. For example, quite apart from the ambiguous status of the sanjak of Alexandretta (İskenderun), it was not entirely clear for some years where the final boundary between Syria and Turkey would be drawn. After the Franco-Turkish armistice in 1921 the former Ottoman province of Halab was effectively cut in half, with the northern Turkishspeaking qadhas (Urfa, Maraş, Ayntab) assigned to Turkey. Tariff barriers were erected between Turkey and Syria, so that Aleppo was cut off from its traditional commercial hinterland in southern and central Anatolia. At the same time the city's population was dramatically swollen by a major influx of Armenian and other Christian refugees from Anatolia. A British official reported in May 1921: "Commerce is stagnant. Aleppo, which before the war traded with the greater part of Asia Minor lying to the north and north east, is now limited to the district lying within a radius of some 20 miles from the town."45

In contrast to the other major cities of Greater Syria (Jerusalem, Beirut, and Damascus), whose status was enhanced by their becoming national capitals, Aleppo remained a "mere" provincial center. Although long remaining the larger city, for the first time in its recent history it became subordinate to Damascus within the new state of Syria. ⁴⁶ The sea change that the city experienced in the course of its transition from the status of a major Ottoman provincial capital to that of second city in the new state of Syria obliged its notables to refashion their political habits and political outlook. They were now faced with a new set of political circumstances in which their role was far from clear.

The very great changes brought about as a result of the rise of Atatürk and the creation of the Turkish Republic (as well as the toll taken by the war in France) had the effect of considerably reducing the scope of France's former ambitions in southern Turkey, especially in Cilicia. This naturally gave rise to a lively sense of insecurity on the ground, as both "Syrians" and "Iraqis" hesitated to throw in their lot too irrevocably with their new colonial masters lest financial or political pressures in Britain or France should prove so strong that the Turks might in some sense come back. The question was resolved rather more quickly in Syria than in Iraq, but the atmosphere of doubt and uncertainty seems to have persisted for rather longer than has been generally recognized.

As a result it was only after the Great Revolt of 1925–26 that certain elements in Aleppo finally and probably rather reluctantly became convinced that their destiny lay with "Syria" and that they could not expect any decisive support or assistance from Turkey for a secessionist movement. In November 1919, after British troops had been withdrawn from Syria, it became clear that there were insufficient French troops to replace them (at least for the time being). Ibrahim Hananu returned to Aleppo, not simply to organize resistance to the French but to do so in cooperation with the Kemalists, despite having been one of the relatively few Aleppines to have fought with Faysal in the Arab Revolt. This cooperation with the Kemalists survived the fall of Aleppo to the French under General Trenga in 1920 and only ceased with Hananu's arrest and the signature of the Franklin-Bouillon agreement between France and Turkey in 1921.

Evidently, Arab nationalism in the conventional sense had little echo in late Ottoman or even early mandate Aleppo. ⁴⁷ Enthusiasm for "Syria" also remained fairly lukewarm among many Aleppines for most of the first decade of French mandatory rule. Strikes and demonstrations took place in the city in the course of the revolt of 1925–26, but neither the

city nor the province seems to have been as wholeheartedly involved as Damascus and its hinterland were. Only at the beginning of the 1930s did political leaders in Aleppo come to what was often a somewhat grudging acceptance that their political destiny was irrevocably bound up with a Syrian state with its capital at Damascus. In that sense they finally abandoned a number of determined if somewhat quixotic earlier attempts to reattach Aleppo to Turkey. Even then a distinct Aleppine faction remained within the nationalist movement, consisting largely of those who believed in some sense that in claiming to be advancing the cause of Syria their fellow nationalists from further south were actually advancing the cause of Damascus.

I have tried to show that the end of Ottoman rule in the Arab provinces marked an unexpected rupture with, rather than a smooth transition from, the Ottoman past. 49 In general it took most of the population by surprise: very few of them had actively sought to bring about that state of affairs. Certainly many administrative and other institutions long survived the end of the empire. But it is important to show that what we have come to know as Arab nationalism (the sense in particular that "Arabs" were distinct from "Turks" and in some sense de facto antagonistic toward them) was very largely a creation of the post-Ottoman era. Attempts to trace such notions to a much earlier period have little scholarly merit and function as part of the foundation myths of the various successor states rather than being matters of empirically verifiable fact. Of course nostalgia is an inappropriate emotion for historians, but it is undeniable that the memory of the empire, in many ways positive, lived on for many decades in the hearts and minds of many Arabs, especially those whose lifetimes spanned Ottoman, mandatory, and "independent" rule.

NOTES

- 1. See Çağlar Keyder, "The Ottoman Empire," 30-44.
- 2. Bruce Masters, Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World, 176.
- 3. The figures are difficult to estimate: this guesstimate is taken from David Murphy, The Arab Revolt, 1916–1918. In any case the Arab forces were most probably fighting because they were ordered to do so by their leaders, who had pledged fealty to (or been financed by) Sharif Husayn of Mecca, rather out of any kind of commitment to an "Arab cause."
- 4. "At the meetings which founded the Arab League in 1944–45, many observers must have been struck by the Ottoman as well as the Arab links between those who spoke for the various Arab states east of Egypt: they had been at school together in Istanbul, they had been in the same army or served the same government,

- they had a common way of looking at the world": Albert Hourani, "The Ottoman Background of the Modern Middle East," 18.
- 5. See Toby Dodge, *Inventing Iraq*, 43–61.
- 6. James L. Gelvin, The Modern Middle East, 80.
- 7. Rashid Khalidi, "Concluding Remarks."
- 8. See the tables in Nikolai Todorov, *The Balkan City, 1400–1900*, chapter 15, "The Population of the Balkan Provinces," 309–26.
- Justin McCarthy, "The Population of Ottoman Syria and Iraq, 1878–1914"; see also Jean-Claude David, "L'espace des chrétiens à Alep."
- 10. Heinz Gaube and Eugen Wirth, *Aleppo*, 427–33. The tables are derived from the statistics in volume 3 of Kamil al-Ghazzi, *Nahr al-Dhahab fil-Ta'rikh Halab*.
- 11. See Mahmoud Yazbak, "Jewish-Muslim Social and Economic Relations in Haifa (1870–1914)"; and two articles by Najwa Al-Qattan: "The Damascene Jewish Community in the Latter Decades of the Eighteenth Century" and "Litigants and Neighbors."
- 12. Among the many works on this, see, for example, Jonathan Frankel, *The Damascus Affair*; Bruce Masters, "The 1850 Events in Aleppo"; and Abdul-Karim Rafeq, "Co-existence and Integration among the Religious Communities in Ottoman Syria."
- 13. For the celebrations in Jerusalem, see Michelle U. Campos, *Ottoman Brothers*. For Aleppo, see Keith David Watenpaugh, *Being Modern in the Middle East*.
- 14. Andrea Marcopoli to Lisbon, August 10, 1908, Fonds Marcopoli, Aleppo.
- 15. See Hasan Kayali, Arabs and Young Turks.
- 16. See al-Ghazzi, Nahr al-Dhahab, 3:352-54.
- Muhammad Y. Muslih, The Origins of Palestinian Nationalism, 89. See also Beshara Doumani, Rediscovering Palestine.
- 18. See Werner Ende, "Iraq in World War I." A frequent British mantra in Iraq during World War I was some version of General Stanley Maude's words to the effect that "our Armies have not come into your Cities and Lands as Conquerors, or enemies, but as Liberators" from those "alien rulers, the Turks who oppressed [you]," both invoking and exaggerating "Ottoman tyranny" to justify the British invasion and occupation. For the full text of Maude's "Proclamation to the People of Baghdad, 19 March 1917," see Philip Willard Ireland, Iraq, 457–58.
- 19. Muhammad Raghib al-Tabbakh, I'lam al-Nubala' bi Ta'rikh Halab al-Shahba', 7:474-75. The list of al-Kawakibi's official posts, both paid and unpaid, is impressive, reflecting his gradual rise through the local administrative hierarchy. But it was widely and quite credibly believed that al-Kawakibi was poisoned in Cairo by agents of the Ottoman government.
- 20. Albert Hourani, Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798–1939, 271.
- Enclosed in various British consular dispatches from Aleppo to Istanbul in July and August 1886: see Great Britain, National Archives (formerly Public Record Office), Foreign Office Papers, London (hereafter FO) 195/1545.
- 22. See Stephen Sheehi, Foundations of Modern Arab Identity; and Sulayman al-Bustani, 'Ibra wa Dhikrayat, which extols the virtues of the multiethnic Ottoman Empire and is dedicated to the memory of Midhat Pasha. See Hourani, Arabic Thought, 264.

- al-Ghazzi, Nahr al-Dhahab, 3:352-54. For a more detailed discussion of al-Kawakibi's politics, see my article "Will the 'Real Nationalists' Please Stand Up?"
- 24. Rashid Khalidi, "'Abd al-Ghani al-'Uraisi and al-Mufid," 54.
- 25. See particularly George Antonius, *The Arab Awakening*. This is one of the first and best known accounts in English of the origins of Arab nationalism. It is misleading, however, to the extent that it does not distinguish sufficiently between the literary production and associated political polemics (*nahdha*) of a relatively small if influential group of Arab intellectuals beginning sometime in the 1860s and the more widespread and less elite movement of "Ottoman disavowal" among the Arab population of the empire in the years after, say, 1910. For an interesting reevaluation of Antonius, see Sheehi, *Foundations of Modern Arab Identity*, 1–15.
- 26. "That those who speak Arabic form a 'nation,' and that this nation should become independent and united, are beliefs which only became articulate and acquired political strength during the present century": Hourani, Arabic Thought, 260. For an interesting revisionist account of the "Ottoman yoke" motif in Bulgaria (where it was accompanied by what seem now to be almost entirely fictitious accounts of forced conversion to Islam), see Rossista Gradeva, "Conversion to Islam in Bulgarian Historiography."
- 27. Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, and Tunisia have fairly long existences in more or less their present form—although Lebanon was much smaller, and Morocco at times extended much further south and west and included territory that is now part of Mauritania and Mali.
- 28. Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, 12 ("Selective amnesia and even deliberate falsification of the facts are both integral parts of nation-formation, which is why academic history writing is perceived as so threatening to the process").
- See Christine Filliou, "The Ottoman Empire between Successors"; and Elektra Kostopoulou, "The Art of Being Replaced."
- 30. In the course of the nineteenth century the Ottoman government promulgated a series of educational, legal, and constitutional reforms (the Tanzimat) and also tried to create something approximating "Ottoman nationalism" or "Ottoman national consciousness" (osmanlılık), explicitly promising good government, security of life and property, and regular (as opposed to arbitrary) tax assessment. In the Hatt-i Şerif of Gülhane (November 3, 1839) these promises were made to "all our subjects, of whatever religion or sect they may be; they shall enjoy them without exception," although they turned out not to be sufficiently attractive to preserve or attract the loyalty of the peoples of the Balkans. For the reception of the Tanzimat in Syria, see Moshe Ma^coz, Ottoman Reform in Syria and Palestine, 1840–1861; and the more recent work of Philip S. Khoury, Urban Notables and Arab Nationalism, 53.
- 31. It appears that the blockade had by far the most devastating effect; see Linda Schatkowski-Schilcher, "The Famine of 1915–1918 in Greater Syria"; and Elizabeth Thompson, *Colonial Citizens*, 19–38.
- 32. As described by Priya Satia, Spies in Arabia.
- 33. In April 1918 Sir Percy Cox, British civil commissioner in Baghdad, characterized Sharif Husayn of Mecca as "a figure who carries no weight in Iraq, where only the

most distant interest is taken in him": India Office, memorandum of April 22, 1918, Letters, Political and Secret 10, 4722/18/5064. In addition, at least as far as Husayn's son 'Abdullah was concerned, his original interest in the alliance with Britain lay more in its potential to increase the family's standing in the Arabian peninsula (against, for instance, the imams of Yemen or, albeit unsuccessfully, against the Al Sa'ud than in ventures into the "Arab lands further north": Mary C. Wilson, *King Abdullah, Britain and the Making of Jordan*, 31. There is no conceivable sense in which the Hashemite family could be said to have been representing the Arabs; they themselves had originally offered their services to the British. The claim that they had any kind of widespread popular backing at the time is equally fanciful.

- 34. C. Ernest Dawn, From Ottomanism to Arabism, 152–53: "prior to October 1914, only 126 men were known to have been 'public advocates of Arab nationalism, or members of Arab nationalist societies' [in Lebanon, Palestine and Syria]."
- 35. See Elie Kedourie, "The Capture of Damascus on 1 October 1918." Kedourie suggests that the Australian and New Zealand forces took pains to make it appear that the Arab forces were the first to enter the city.
- See James L. Gelvin, *Divided Loyalties*; and Nadine Méouchy, "Le movement des *'isabat* en Syrie du Nord à travers le témoinage du chaykh Youssef Saadoun (1919–1921)."
- 37. Charles Townshend, Desert Hell.
- 38. Pre-1914 Halab Vilayet was made up of the sanjaks of Halab, Ayntab, Maraş, and Urfa. The French authorities detached the *qadhas* of İskenderun, and Antakya (in Halab sanjak) from Syria and handed the area to Turkey in 1939; Ayntab and Maraş are now entirely in Turkish territory, but Raqqa, one of the qadhas of Urfa, and part of the qadha of Harran (together containing some 15 percent of the total population of the sanjak in 1911–12) are now within Syria.
- 39. Kemal H. Karpat, Ottoman Population (1830-1914), 56.
- Bruce Masters, "The Political Economy of Aleppo in an Age of Ottoman Reform," 312.
- 41. The books were published in 1923 and 1926, respectively, so it is reasonable to suppose that their opinions were as they stated them.
- 42. Andrea Marcopoli to Lisbon, February 22, 1909; Fonds Marcopoli, Aleppo.
- 43. Dawn, From Ottomanism to Arabism, 174-76.
- 44. Arab Bureau report, April 10, 1918, FO 882/17.
- 45. H. M. Consul, Damascus, to Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, London, No. 153, May 11, 1921, FO 371/6455, E 5774/117/89.
- 46. The population of Damascus only outstripped that of Aleppo in 1995. See Jean-Claude David, "Alep."
- 47. See Khoury, *Urban Notables*, 76–86; and Dawn, *From Ottomanism to Arabism*, 174–76. Of course several Aleppines attended the Syrian Congress in 1919–20 and served in Faysal's government in Damascus.
- 48. See Peter Sluglett, "Urban Dissidence in Mandatory Syria." For further evidence of the persistence of the "Turkish connection," see the weekly French intelligence summaries (*Bullétins d'Information Hébdomadaire*) for Aleppo for 1927; Archives du Mandat Français en Syrie, Nantes, Box 1757. The desire for some sort of

- administrative autonomy was still being articulated in 1932: ibid., June 18, December 17, December 24, 1932, Box 1654.
- 49. "Obviously, the Ottoman Empire came to an end in the aftermath of World War I, but some cities remained imperial, thanks to their multi-ethnic and multi-religious texture [and] the visibility of different ethnic and linguistic communities in the urban landscape.... Cities like Istanbul, Aleppo, Jerusalem, Kirkuk of Baghdad can be defined as imperial...because they perpetuated parts of the imperial tradition of coexistence, and by their calm vitality, challenged dominant nationalist ideologies and showed other possible political formulae." Hamit Bozarslan, "Representing Iraqi History through the Arts."

Narrating Experiences of World War I

The Formation of Arab Perspectives through Narration in Memoirs

Orçun Can Okan

The wrenching changes that World War I brought in its wake shattered the complexity and subtlety of the network of affiliations and loyalties characteristic of most Arabs in the nineteenth century and opened the Middle East to a brave new world of aggressive, assertive new nationalisms. This chapter examines the narratives on World War I in the memoirs of six politically influential figures from the late Ottoman provinces with different sociopolitical and geographical backgrounds who experienced such wrenching changes: King 'Abdullah b. al-Husayn, Amir Shakib Arslan, Muhammad Kurd 'Ali, 'Izzat Darwaza, Salim 'Ali Salam, and Ja'far al-'Askari. I hope to offer a comparative sense of how post-Ottoman spaces were imagined and constructed in the aftermath of the war in the Arab East. In recent years memoirs of all the individuals considered in this study have been translated into Turkish and published as part of a series titled "The Ottoman from the Arab Perspective."² The present study, however, argues that the prioritization of a common "Arabness" in perspective makes it difficult to appreciate the complexity of the affiliations and loyalties that the memoirists upheld over the years. In an attempt to relate constructions of narratives primarily to conditions of experiences, this discussion highlights differences in the ways in which the memoirists constructed their narratives on World War I, which were informed by manifold experiences and constructed through competing perspectives.

A cursory look at the six memoirists in late Ottoman political frameworks suffices to affirm that they were members of the late Ottoman world from different backgrounds, in different social positions. Politi-

cal alliances and their relationship to the late Ottoman framework of politics through their regional environments, the socioeconomic and empire-wide historical conditions into which they were born, and their occupations were all factors in shaping the differing experiences of World War I for these ex-Ottoman citizens. Figures such as 'Abdullah b. al-Husayn (1882-1951) and Amir Shakib Arslan (1869-1946), for instance, could both effectively mobilize resources for the Ottoman state as Ottoman aristocrats and could also demand returns. But their regional backgrounds (the Hijaz and al-Shuwayfat Lebanon, respectively) were two different political environments in the late Ottoman Empire in terms of their relation to the Ottoman center and in terms of their socioeconomic, religious, and cultural dynamics. At the outset of the war both men were parliamentarians in the empire. But 'Abdullah was practically a representative of his father, the sharif of Mecca, in the Ottoman capital, whereas Arslan was an important member in the ruling circle of Ittihadists who were working to implement the very measures of centralization that leaders like the sharif of Mecca were working hard to resist. In a manner that accorded with their prewar political considerations and alliances, Arslan assumed key roles in the Ottoman war effort, while 'Abdullah played an active role in the negotiations between the British and the Hashemites from February 1914 onward, as one of the architects of the revolt that broke out in the Hijaz against the Ottoman state in 1916.

In contrast to the privileged births of 'Abdullah b. al-Husayn and Amir Shakib Arslan, Muhammad Kurd 'Ali (1876–1953), and 'Izzat Darwaza (1888–1984) were born into families of more modest means in late Ottoman Damascus and Nablus, respectively. Kurd 'Ali made his living by working as a journalist from the age of sixteen, while Darwaza worked as a civil servant in the postal and telegraphic services. Having been born more than a decade apart in such varied late Ottoman spaces, just as 'Abdullah and Arslan were, they experienced their first encounters with the established Ottoman order in differing ways. It was under the watchful eyes of the Hamidian regime that Kurd 'Ali began to publish his journal *al-Muqtabas* in Cairo in 1906. Darwaza, in contrast, was twenty years old when the 1908 revolution took place and had his first experiences of political engagement with the established order in Nablus. As Kurd 'Ali benefited from the troublesome patronage of Cemal Paşa in Syria during the war, men like Darwaza in networks of energetic nationalist societies would regard such accommodations as cowardly cooperation.

Profession and occupational background also influenced personal views. Besides other points of differentiation, success in trade and

commercial network building made Salim 'Ali Salam (1868–1938) a major power broker in late Ottoman Beirut as a leading member of the Beirut Reform Committee. Ja'far al-'Askari (1885–1936), who was born in Baghdad and graduated from the Ottoman military college in Istanbul, participated in the retaking of Edirne during the Balkan Wars as a military officer. Salam's experience of World War I as a representative of Beirut in the parliament struggling with the cruelties and harsh war conditions in Syria was surely different from the experience of al-'Askari, who ran from one battle to the next in uniform. Their varied professions, milieus, and means of political influence made their war experiences different.

In recognition of such dynamics this study highlights that homophonic articulations of monolithic Arab perspectives on World War I do not emerge from the memoirs of these six individuals. Their "Arabness" appears to have had more to do with the postwar circumstances in which they wrote their memoirs. The narratives that they constructed may be considered at best *efforts* to form Arab perspectives on World War I after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. The following discussion examines the memoirs of these six individuals in three parts by pointing to some of the most significant distinctions in their views of the same events, relationships, and individuals on the paths leading to the war, during the war, and in its aftermath. A discussion of how the memoirs are treated here will clarify this approach.

NARRATING THE PAST OR THE PRESENT?

It is significant that all six of the memoirs treated here were written after World War I and are *not* compilations of what Sati^c al-Husari calls "immediate writing," the kind of writing practiced in diaries.³ Salim Tamari's works have made inspiring historical use of the diaries written by Ottoman Arabs during the war.⁴ Unlike these works, the memoirists discussed here were looking back on their experiences in postwar circumstances and were writing for postwar audiences. They offer not only subjective appraisals of World War I but also reconsiderations and reevaluations of past experiences over the years. Hence the boundaries between the real and the fictitious in these memoirs are indeed blurred and permeable. The mind plays tricks on the authors in regard to what happened back in time: new textual experiences of past events are created in such memoirs as the story of the experience is narrated in the present. These "tricks of the mind," not dissimilar to the "trick of the eye" in Pere Borrell

del Caso's painting *Escaping Criticism* (1874, Banco de España, Madrid), may be seen as fruitful fields of historical inquiry rather than obstacles to reaching the historical "truth" behind what is narrated. Memoirs are invested with the author's claims to historical truth, so a close reading offers historians the chance to witness the ways in which a historical figure escapes from being "regarded" to "regarding" in relation to competing loyalties and alliances upheld over the years.

A meaningful question that may be raised at this point is why the memoirists wrote their memoirs. In the case of Arslan answering allegations and accusations as well as downplaying flattery are noted as reasons for writing his memoirs. 5 Kurd 'Ali (with claims to objectivity) calls upon future generations to share his repudiation of those who discomfited him by their mistakes or hurt him by their hubris. Among the reasons that Darwaza mentions for writing his memoirs is the insistence of his relatives and those interested "in knowledge and in the Arab Movement." 7 Salam's account of how he began to write his memoirs is similar to Darwaza's: he too began to write due to the insistence of his friends.8 The narrative attention paid to articulating the reasons for writing and their intimate connection to the question of audience is noteworthy even in al-'Askari's incomplete memoirs, which were being prepared for publication in Arabic and English for an audience that included many British friends and acquaintances.9 A similar but more striking example of audience awareness becomes apparent in comparing King 'Abdullah's memoirs published in 1945 to its epilogue published in 1951. 'Abdullah apparently did not feel the need to comment in detail on why he wrote his memoirs or why people should read them. But in the epilogue published in 1951—which appeared after the establishment of Israel in 1948 he makes the following remarks at the very beginning: "I wrote these memoirs for the Arabs as my testimonial to them of the efforts that I had made on their behalf and of my genuine concern for their welfare." ¹⁰

NARRATING THE PATHS LEADING TO THE WAR

Narratives that claim to present an Arab perspective on a certain period may actually be representative of experiences that were cultivated in broader frameworks, such as the struggle for political agency. For the memoirists in question here, the process of Ottoman entry into World War I appears to have served as an example of crucial decision-making processes from which the non-Ittihadist Arab Ottomans were often excluded, no matter how profoundly these decisions would affect them.

Indeed, with the exception of Arslan's memoirs, Ottoman entry into the war appears to have been a case in point of how limited "Arab" political agency was in the late Ottoman Empire. Differences of narration, however, raise questions about the extent to which the memoirists' political agency in the final years of the Ottoman Empire was first and foremost Arab, considering the differences in perspective and the depth and length of the remarks on the ante bellum alliances, strategies, and calculations in the empire.

The memoirists' Arabness was only one factor in their narratives on the Ottoman entry into World War I, as shown quite clearly in Salam's memoirs. Salam arrived in Istanbul as a deputy of Beirut in early June 1914 with plans "to defend the rights of Arabs in the parliament." But he was surprised to find the government's draft act decision on the table. According to Salam, Enver Paşa cared little about the complaint letters from Beirut regarding the news of mass conscription as he was preparing for the approaching war. When Salam submitted a motion in January 1915 asking the government to explain the reasons for entering the war, he had a conversation with Talat Paşa, who told him to withdraw the motion because it would stir up trouble within the government. But Salam says that he answered by claiming that it was his right to know: "For a long time now whenever we entered a war, its end has always been bad for us. When I return to my electoral district they will naturally ask me the reasons why we entered this war and ask me the question that I am asking your Highness now: Since the war is carried out with our wealth and by our children, is it not a necessity that we know the reasons for it?"11

According to Salam, after some hesitation Talat Paşa gave in and told him:

For a long time now Russia's goal has been to occupy the capital. Britain's goal is to occupy Iraq and France's is Syria. ¹² There is no means to make them give up these thoughts. If we were to keep out of the war, they would share these territories among themselves. Therefore we were obliged to entwine our destiny with that of Germany. Yes, there is an alliance between us and Germany, but this is a secret alliance. And it is your speaker who sealed this alliance. When he explains its terms to you, you will see that it is in favor of our interests. ¹³

It appears from Salam's account that he became one of the few privileged individuals in the empire who knew the terms of the agreement

that had been signed with Germany, but that was possible only after a private conversation with Halil Bey, the Speaker of the Ottoman parliament, and as a result of his consistent efforts. It is crucial to note that Salam's narrative is informed not only by being an Arab but by being an Arab deputy in the Ottoman parliament. The argument in his narrative is based on the notion that as a parliamentarian he had electors to inform and answer to.

In contrast, in the memoirs of Ja'far al-'Askari, who had been a military officer engaged in military-political struggles, the narrative on the reasons for the Ottoman entry into the world war is very brief. The author then moves on to narrating his efforts during the war in related military campaigns. The few comments that al-'Askari does make on the reasons for the Ottoman entry into the war are primarily on the rivalries (in which he depicts himself as not having been a part) between the camp of German supporters led by Enver Paşa and the camp of Cavid Bey and Cemal Paşa, who were not totally convinced about fighting on Germany's side at the time. 14 Whereas al-'Askari's brief remarks about the Ottoman general mobilization (seferberlik) are primarily in military terms, Darwaza's narrative on the path leading to the war gives detailed accounts of the effects that the Ottoman general mobilization had on everyday life in the Arab provinces. 15 In the much lengthier narrative of Darwaza, who was working as a civil servant in the provinces with no involvement in the ruling circles at the time, ante bellum alliances in Istanbul and rival camps do not constitute the central focus. Darwaza's observations on the ground-level effects of the mobilization together with his historical approach to the relations between Germany and the Ottoman Empire rooted in the two decades preceding the war reflect his career: he began as a middle-class bureaucrat and became a prolific nationalist writer and intellectual.

Darwaza's memoirs are outstanding in many aspects, especially when contrasted with Kurd 'Ali's memoirs. Kurd 'Ali was another influential intellectual of the interwar period and was also outside the echelons of the Ottoman ruling elite before World War I, but his narrative does not include the same attentive observations on the prewar circumstances that shaped Ottoman decision-making processes at the outset of the war.

Perhaps precisely because he was involved in the higher echelons of Ottoman power structures Shakib Arslan comments on various considerations of the Ottoman decision makers in ante bellum Istanbul in the most attentive manner. Being close to Enver Paşa as few others were, Arslan had an insider's perspective on Ottoman considerations at the outset

of the war. Through his personal impressions he notes that the British enmity shown in Egypt was the most important reason why the Ottomans entered the war. Arslan's remarks that link the outset of the war to its aftermath in a consequential manner are also highly noteworthy, pointing to the significance of the question of agency not only for Arabs but for Ottomans in general. He notes that before the Ottomans entered the war he personally heard Talat Paşa say: "We are between life and death. There cannot be a moderate path between these two." The government's decision to side with Germany in the war seemed to be the only plausible option available: "Even if the Allies had made a hundred agreements with the Ottomans, in the case of their victory nobody would be able to force them to keep their promises. Did they not make agreements with Sharif Husayn on the independence of all the Arab countries? And what happened [in the end]?" 18

Based on his personal conversations with the German ambassador Hans Freiherr von Wangenheim, Arslan could recount in his memoirs the ambassador's accusations that Sadrazam Said Halim Paşa was being indecisive. He also reported the ambassador's enthusiasm for an alliance with the Ottomans *after* Germany's defeat at the Battle of Marne in September 1914. The most detailed account of negotiations in ante bellum Istanbul is given by Arslan, showing that he was the person most politically invested in the reigning individuals of the era.

Like Salam's narrative, King 'Abdullah's narrative emphasizes being pulled into the war because of interests that very few people (except the small circle of Ittihadists in Istanbul) were informed about. His position within the Ottoman political framework at the outset of the war was different from Salam's, and he narrates being denied political agency through political references that are also different. At the outset of the war 'Abdullah was in Istanbul with hopes of negotiating the railway expansion scheme that the government was planning to undertake, which would curb the sharif's authority in the Hijaz. In 'Abdullah's conversations with Talat Paşa and Enver Paşa he also was surprised to find out that the main subject matter was their demand that he gather volunteers for the approaching war. Puzzled about where his volunteers would fight, he notes that he said to Enver Paşa: "It appears that with your regular forces you intend to help your allies." According to 'Abdullah, Enver Paşa turned red at this point and told him to "leave as soon as possible to gather volunteers who are willing to undertake such sacred duty." 'Abdullah's mention of this conversation is particularly significant considering his statement later in his memoirs regarding Ottoman motivations

in entering the war and the demands of the government: "[W]hen the British attacked Basra, they met no resistance. Basra fell and the British army began to move toward Qurnah. Arabs were shocked when they realized that regular forces composed of Iraqis were sent to defend the Turkish provinces." It could be said that by constructing his narrative as he does King 'Abdullah positioned the future revolt upon legitimate grounds as a way of defending Arabs from the carelessness of selfish Ittihadists who did not listen to his father and sought an ill-fated war with irredentist ambitions in Caucasia and Egypt. Although 'Abdullah like Salam had limited political agency in the empire, it is crucial to note that the king's narrative refers not to an electoral district but to a far-sighted father and the carelessness of Ittihadists who were using Arabs for their ill-fated ambitions.

NARRATING THE WAR YEARS

In all these memoirs the encounters between Arabs and Turks—in stringent conditions of struggling for political agency—appear to have been highly influential. This section considers the figure of Cemal Paşa, the highest Ottoman authority in Syria and western Arabia from December 1914 to December 1917, as well as the revolt that began in the Hijaz in 1916 in some detail. Cemal Paşa's policies and the revolt in 1916 appear to have become touchstones for the memoirists in the aftermath of the war in their evaluation of commitment to given ideals and causes.

Narratives on Cemal Paşa and his policies during the war in Syria clearly distinguish him within the framework of the oppressive "Ittihadist" image. This is especially true in the memoirs of Arslan, Salam, Kurd 'Ali, and Darwaza, who were all from the geographical "Greater Syria," while al-'Askari's and King 'Abdullah's immediate memories of the war years appear to have rested elsewhere. Reminding his audience of the stringent war conditions that he experienced as an army officer, al-'Askari states that he knew nothing of "the Committee of Union and Progress's decisions to fight against the Arab cause and of what the blood shedder Cemal Paşa was doing in Syria" until he was told about these events in captivity at the hands of British in mid-1916. He knew nothing about the matter because he had left Turkey in June 1915 and had been involved in constant warfare ever since. Upon learning that many secret Arab societies (including al-'Ahd, of which he was a member) were now subject to the cruelties of Cemal Paşa and the Ittihadists, he swore to take revenge and do everything he could to join the forces of the sharif of Mecca

as soon as possible.²³ Although al-'Askari rarely mentions Cemal Paşa in comparison to the memoirists from Greater Syria, it is noteworthy that he points to the acts of Cemal Paşa as what triggered his joining the forces of the sharif of Mecca. Yet the convenience in the ex-Ottoman officer al-'Askari's remark that he just "didn't know" what Cemal Paşa was doing in Syria until his captivity at the hands of the British is also striking.

In an interesting contrast to al-'Askari's narrative, King 'Abdullah does not comment on Cemal Paşa's acts and policies as a radical turning point in the relationships between the Arabs and the Turks as he narrates the war years. He had good reasons to refrain from describing Cemal Paşa's acts as the turning point in the history of the "Arab awakening" and to stress instead the excitement that the Arab Revolt in the Hijaz generated in every Arab's heart. By the time 'Abdullah wrote his memoirs, many of the highest echelons of state institutions in the countries near his kingdom were occupied by ex-Ottoman Arabs who had experienced World War I as he did. It is perhaps only understandable that his narrative of the war years highlights his own and the Hashemite contribution to the Arab struggle rather than Cemal Paşa's.

Unlike the narratives of Ja'far al-'Askari and King 'Abdullah, Salim 'Ali Salam's narrative of Cemal Paşa and his policies in Syria is very detailed. This has to do primarily with Salam's regional background: he was the representative of Beirut in the Ottoman parliament. Cemal Paşa was carrying out his "brutality" in the very neighborhood that Salam was from. A motif of confrontation dominates his narrative on Cemal Paşa, who was "ordering the execution of the sons of the homeland." Unlike al-'Askari and King 'Abdullah, Salam was involved at a much more personal level in the encounters between Cemal Paşa and the Arab leaders that he persecuted. Salam was among those summoned to the military court set up at 'Aleyh, even though he was later acquitted. In the aftermath of the war he could pay significant attention in his memoirs to the petitions made to him to intervene on behalf of those who were arrested. They had little success, however, because he was also being interrogated by the paşa and was trying to prove that he himself was not a traitor. His words on his duty as a deputy of the Arab nation to do something to stop Cemal Paşa's cruel acts were informed by the pressing conditions of their immediate environment during the war, the memory of which was still fresh in post-Ottoman geographical Syria.²⁴

Unlike Salam, Kurd 'Ali was known to have cooperated with Cemal Paşa and the Ittihadists during the war. Yet on many occasions in his memoirs Kurd 'Ali too emphasizes the sufferings that he experienced at

their hands, challenging the accusations that he was a puppet in the paşa's hands during the war. In what seems to be a bid to prove his loyalty to the Arab cause, Kurd 'Ali even notes that Cemal Paşa told him: "I was thinking of hanging you but I respected your knowledge." Kurd 'Ali does not refrain from stating that Cemal Paşa did indeed pay him for publishing his newspapers and that the paşa once told him: "I know how to use the pen in the service of government; I appreciate the condition we are in." Having supported Cemal Paşa, which provided him with "comfortable patronage when many others were in troubles and hardships," Kurd 'Ali later appeared to be uncomfortable with the question of his responsibility for the Arab lives lost at the hands of the paşa. On several occasions Kurd 'Ali explains his relation to the prosecutions and executions at 'Aleyh and how he tried to convince Cemal Paşa to forgive the Arabs accused of treason. He takes care to note that he helped friends such as 'Abdulrahman Shahbandar by not revealing their whereabouts when Cemal Paşa inquired about them: "How could he ask me to tell him where my friend Shahbandar was hiding so that he could kill him?" He added: "In those days we would hide even our enemies, we would do as much good for them as we could."25

Shakib Arslan also distances himself from the Ittihadists and Cemal Paşa in his memoirs by stating that he had good relations with Cemal Paşa until the paşa resorted to the method of intimidation and bloodshed by imposing exiles and carrying out executions of Arabs when other prominent members of the CUP allowed him to do whatever he wanted in Syria.²⁶ Although Arslan is renowned for his intimate personal connection with Enver Paşa, he regretfully notes that "the policy that Cemal Paşa followed in Syria is one of the worst catastrophes that happened to the Ottoman State and the Muslim World": although "Cemal Paşa was primarily responsible for these events, Talat and Enver are also responsible for giving him the chance." ²⁷ Arslan adds that Talat Paşa and Enver Paşa allowed Cemal Paşa to be careless in Syria on purpose so that they could hold him responsible in the future. It is especially important for our purposes to recognize how Arslan defends himself against accusations of complicity with the Ittihadists as he refers to the occasions when he tried to prevent what was happening in Syria through his connections and friendships,²⁸ although Cemal Paşa prevented him from speaking to Enver Paşa about matters in Syria on two occasions.²⁹

Arslan also stresses with regret how his enemies used the few occasions during the war years when he did successfully manage to save Arabs from Cemal Paşa against him after the war to exaggerate his influence

among Ottoman leaders. According to them, Arslan wrote, "I could get whatever I wanted done, and the ones who did not return from exile did not return because I did not want them to." Arslan, like Salam and Kurd 'Ali, narrates his struggle with Cemal Paşa in great detail, which highlights not only the significance of Cemal Paşa in the "Arab" memory of the war years but also the relationships that the memoirists sought to establish and sustain in their postwar milieus.

'Izzat Darwaza, like Salam, Kurd 'Ali, and Arslan, pays great attention to the policies of Cemal Paşa in Syria in his memoirs. With a number of references to the memoirs of figures involved in the events of the period and to published scholarly works, he points to Cemal Paşa's ambitions to become the independent ruler of Egypt and Syria and links the paşa's decision to strike a blow at the leading members of the Arab movement to the failure of the Suez Offensive. What is most significant is the extent to which these events are articulated as living memories: they are narrated within the framework of a shared responsibility for the pain that Arabs suffered at the hands of the "blood shedder" during the war. A striking example is Darwaza's narrative of the September 1915 visit of the committee headed by Sheikh As'ad al-Shuqayri (the mufti of the 4th Army) to Istanbul in order to demonstrate Syrian support for the Ottoman struggle at Gallipoli. Darwaza remarks that this visit contributed to Cemal Paşa's reputation in Istanbul and encouraged him to hang the second group of Arab movement members in May 1916. According to Darwaza, al-Shuqayri and others who praised Cemal Paşa in Istanbul shared the responsibility for the tragedy of 'Aleyh. Darwaza believed that Kurd 'Ali, for instance, played both sides of the game by remaining close to Cemal Paşa and mentioned his speech in Istanbul during this visit praising the paşa.31

Another touchstone in the memoirists' narratives on the war years is whether the events of 1916 should be seen as an Arab Revolt or as Sharif Husayn's revolt in the Hijaz. Until very recently narratives of the revolt in many popular and academic histories have followed an outline similar to the one constructed in the immediate aftermath of the war, involving Ottoman imperialist oppression, Turkification, and a struggle by the Arabs to throw off the alien Turkish yoke. More recent scholarly works, however, have drawn attention to the "appropriations" of the revolt by others. Differences in the perspectives of the six memoirists make such appropriations ever more apparent.

Shakib Arslan, for instance, describes a telling occasion right after Sharif Husayn's declaration of the revolt in June 1916. Cemal Paşa told Arslan in his office that the Arabs had revolted and therefore must be punished. Arslan says that he responded with the following words: "Why do you say so?! Sharif Husayn does not represent all the Arabs! Do you not see that thousands of Arabs in Iraq and Syria are fighting on the same side as you?" In addition to the distinction among Arabs that he proudly makes in his memoirs, in this instance Arslan argues that the cause of the sharif's revolt was not Cemal Paşa's oppressive measures and executions in Syria. He believes that the revolt would have taken place regardless of Cemal Paşa's actions, because Sharif Husayn's connections with the British and his idea of revolting against the state at the first opportunity dated all the way back to the Hamidian era. 35

Although this perspective disregards the effects of the CUP's centralization policies on Sharif Husayn's decision to revolt, it nevertheless challenges the discourse on it being an Arab revolt in response to the betrayal of Ottoman ideals by Turkist Ittihadists. Arslan's view serves as a reminder that the revolt was indeed "appropriated as the single most important milestone in the coming of the age of Arab nationalism." ³⁶

It is likewise noteworthy that the memoirs of Salam, a leading member of the Beirut Reform Committee who confronted the Ottoman state as an Arab reformist on many occasions before the war, do not discuss the revolt in any detail. In his treatment of the war years Salam appears to have prioritized the sufferings caused by Cemal Paşa in Syria, his own involvement in resisting this brutality, and his negotiations with other leading Ottoman politicians in Syria in order to stop it instead of narrating the revolt. Salam was not able to complete his memoirs, so it is unclear whether his silence on the revolt was intentional or whether he simply did not have the opportunity to write about it. But a comparison of Salam's memoirs to al-'Askari's also incomplete memoirs is suggestive. In al-'Askari's narrative of the war years the revolt appears to be the dawn of a new era that began in mid-1916, when patriotic Arabs reacted to the cruelties of the likes of Cemal Paşa. In his narrative of those initial stages when the "Iraqi" officers were going to the Hijaz to join the revolt, al-'Askari refers to Sharif Husayn's forces as the "Arab Army," although al-'Askari experienced difficulties because his commitment to the Arab cause was initially doubted by the organizers of the revolt.³⁷

It is significant that al-'Askari mentions officers joining the "Arab" army. Ironically, however, he also mentions the difficulties in sustaining communication between officers and soldiers who did not always understand each other's colloquial Arabic, sometimes mistaking it for Turkish.³⁸

Darwaza places a stronger emphasis than al-'Askari on the Arab struggle in the prewar period. He regards the revolt as a stage in the existing Arab movement, pointing to the activities of Arab societies such as al-Fatat and Hizb'ul-Lamarkaziyah. Indeed Darwaza remarks that at the outset of the war he had considered it a great opportunity for Arabs to gain their freedom and independence. In his opinion the revolt gave a more national form to the existing movement, with long-term effects on the past and the future of the Arab nation.³⁹

Darwaza's perspective on the revolt is in sharp contrast to the ambiguous stance in the memoirs of Kurd 'Ali. The possibility that the Ottomans could win the war against all odds and then severely persecute the Arabs who acted against the state seems to have been a matter of great concern to him. This caused him to remain undecided about the revolt and even about the Syrian Arabs who planned to take initiatives for the future of Syria. Darwaza's perspective on the revolt thus clearly signifies a different historical trajectory for the Arabs in the Ottoman Empire than the perspective exemplified in Kurd 'Ali's memoirs.

King 'Abdullah's account is the most anxious and assertive effort to form and promote an Arab perspective on the revolt. His narration of the sequence of events that led to the declaration of the revolt is particularly poignant. He illustrates his contact with Lord Herbert Kitchener in Cairo as if it was the result of a coincidental visit to the khedive. King 'Abdullah claims that in the meeting that Kitchener sought after this "coincidental" first meeting he took the position of defending the Ottoman government by reminding Kitchener of the legitimacy of the sultan-caliph. 41 He does not mention, however, that it was he who sought out Kitchener on his visit to Egypt in February 1914 and that he even inquired whether Britain would intervene if Istanbul attempted to remove his father from office. 42 Moreover, in regard to the famous McMahon-Husayn correspondence, King 'Abdullah states in his memoirs that he was actually disturbed by the letters that Ronald Storrs at the British Residency in Cairo sent him after the Ottoman defeat in the Suez. He claims that the first of these promised British support for an Arab revolt and was addressed to King 'Abdullah The second was from Sir Henry McMahon to 'Abdullah's father. 43 As Kedourie has demonstrated, however, the first letter came from Mecca and was sent by 'Abdullah to Storrs on July 14, 1915. 44 King 'Abdullah's historical amnesia about these initial stages of the revolt should be evaluated in terms of the Arabizing effect of linking the revolt with the sufferings of Arabs under the Ittihadist yoke instead of linking it with British cooperation. When King 'Abdullah constructed

his narrative in 1945, his pan-Arab reputation was badly tarnished after the many concessions that he had to make to Britain in order to secure his position in his own country.⁴⁵ A depiction of the revolt as an obligation in what had become a struggle for the survival of the Arab nation was apparently appropriate in the post-Ottoman Arab East from King 'Abdullah's perspective.⁴⁶

NARRATING THE AFTERMATH OF THE WAR

In response to criticisms of the Hashemites in the aftermath of the war Ja'far al-'Askari (who sided with the Hashemites from 1916 until his death in 1936) points to the necessity of understanding the "Arab cause" in order to evaluate Hashemite initiatives on correct premises. According to al-'Askari, at the outset of World War I Arabs had been inclined to support the Ottoman Empire and had postponed their struggle for the Arab cause until the end of the war. But cruelties such as those of Cemal Paşa in Syria led to a change of opinion: "It was matters as such and not hopes of monetary gain or British inducements that informed Sharif Husayn's initiatives during the war years," al-'Askari writes, "no matter what some misguided people who know nothing about the Arab cause may think." 47 Even when he points to "Arab unity" as the end goal and criticizes France for not abiding by its own undertakings at the San Remo Conference in April 1920 al-'Askari does not depict either the Hashemites or the British as responsible for the disappointments that the Arabs faced after the war. The outcome of the San Remo Conference was intimately linked to wartime events such as the Sykes-Picot Agreement and the Balfour Declaration. 48 But al-'Askari's narrative seems to minimize the effects of the Hashemite and British initiatives during the war on postwar settlements. This is perhaps the imprint of the circumstances in post-Ottoman Iraq, which al-'Askari helped build with the British, serving under a Hashemite king.

Historic junctures such as the Sykes-Picot Agreement and the Balfour Declaration as well as the Arab Revolt were wartime events that had an undeniable impact on postwar settlements. But, like al-'Askari, King 'Abdullah seems to locate the regrettable consequences of the war in the postwar years. In his reference to the unfulfilled ideal of Arab unity, King 'Abdullah places the emphasis not on the alliance choices that the British and the Hashemites made during the war but on the Wahhabist Saudis.⁴⁹ King 'Abdullah even notes that if he and those who were with him had known that his efforts during the war would come to such an end they

would have severed their connections with those who were involved.⁵⁰ It should be remembered that as one of leaders of the Hashemite initiatives during the war 'Abdullah's own reputation as a servant of the Arab cause was far from indisputable by the time he published his memoirs in 1945, and especially by the time its epilogue *al-Takmilah* was published in 1951. Palestinians held him chiefly responsible for their plight as a whole; and, in their eagerness to dissociate themselves from any blame for the loss of Palestine, other Arab rulers encouraged the Palestinians to point to the Jordanian king as the prime culprit.⁵¹ The circumstances in which King 'Abdullah wrote his memoirs demanded that his narrative should uphold the Hashemites as servants of Arabs who worked only for the welfare of the Arab nation.

Referring to King 'Abdullah's memoirs with reverence on many occasions in his own memoirs, Darwaza claims that Hashemite efforts during the war had desirable consequences for Arabs. It is noteworthy that Darwaza, as one of the leading pan-Syrian Arab nationalists of the 1920s who published voluminous books on Arabs and Arab nationalism, took a positive attitude toward the revolt. According to Darwaza, if postwar settlements were ultimately not what Arabs had hoped for, it was because of the weakness that they displayed in attempting to attain what they desired. From Darwaza's perspective the revolt gave Arabs significant room for maneuver to attain their wishes and the promises made to the Zionists during the war were in fact much weaker than those made to Sharif Husayn. According to Darwaza, "if it wasn't for the revolt, the calamity of colonization in the Arab countries would have been much stronger." The idea that the revolt caused the Ottomans to lose the war unfortunately got stuck in people's minds. The Allies would still have won without the revolt, and Arabs would have been deprived of a major means in their national struggle. 52

In contrast with Darwaza's perspective Kurd 'Ali narrates a conversation with Faysal in the years immediately following World War I concerning the employment of Palestinians in Syrian state service. Kurd 'Ali claims to have told him: "All the Arab provinces are going to become one state you said or they said; and we were glad and happy. Our children served your father the king voluntarily in order to realize this goal. And then you said that the Hijaz, Syria, and Iraq are all going to be independent. Unwillingly we agreed to that as well. Now we're gathering all the people in Syria and emptying out Palestine." ⁵³

According to Kurd 'Ali, Faysal responded that "the destiny of Southern Syria [Palestine] and Northern Syria is one." But Kurd 'Ali believed

that these words were being dictated behind the curtain to Faysal, who was too willing to draw Palestinians toward southern Syria. ⁵⁴ Although the context for this criticism was the employment of Palestinians in Syrian state service, Kurd 'Ali portrays himself as having criticized not only Faysal but the Hashemites in general because Arab unity was becoming an ever more difficult goal to be accomplished as hopes turned into disappointments after the war. It should be noted, however, that many Arab leaders were held responsible for the unfulfilled goal of Arab unity in the aftermath of the war. Kurd 'Ali himself was criticized for having weakened the cause of Arab unity by taking part in mandate governments as a minister and thus playing a role in Syria's division into small statelets. ⁵⁵

The incomplete memoirs of Salam offer the least amount of information on his perspective on the aftermath of the war. The latest narrated events are Salam's efforts in 1918 to bring the Arab families who were exiled to Anatolia back to their homes. Sefore the people of Beirut witnessed the arrival of the Allied forces in their city, the decision to ask the Ottoman governor to leave and to establish an Arab government in Beirut under Hashemite rule had been made in Salam's house. When the Allied forces entered Beirut a few days later and removed the flag of the Arab Revolt from the Grand Serail, events took a disappointing turn for Salam as well. As Kamal Salibi describes, he spent the remaining years of his life as an unwilling citizen of Greater Lebanon under the French Mandate, leading the Muslim opposition in Beirut as his former Christian friends and associates in the city took over power in the country as heads of the Christian political establishment.

Arslan's memoirs indicate what Salibi meant when he referred to the postwar order that Salam found around him. In a manner that highlights how the memory of World War I became a ground of political claims and contentions in the postwar Arab East, Arslan complains that "when fortune turned against the state and France invaded the country" very few of the Maronites remembered what he had done in his times of influence to prevent what might have befallen them. He informs his audience that he had sent a telegraph to Enver Paşa at the beginning of the war, assuring him of the loyalty of the Maronites. But in the aftermath of the war, he says, such good deeds were forgotten. His reasoning for why that was the case is particularly interesting: "If I wasn't someone who defended the cause of Syrian independence against France, the number of the Maronites who would confess my good deeds for them and outspokenly defend me would be much higher." 58

CONCLUSION

Arslan's words constitute a striking example not only of how these memoirs served the purpose of challenging and shaping the memory of World War I but also of how the war years were remembered in relation to the postwar circumstances in which the memoirs were written. Rather than offering Arab perspectives on the war per se, the memoirs were efforts at presenting Arab perspectives in the postwar circumstances. The six memoirs treated here are significant in terms of the immense and multifarious transformations that the memoirists experienced before, during, and after World War I. Even in cases where common leitmotifs can be identified, these commonalities are articulated in such different contexts and from such different political points of view that the polyphony of the narratives makes it clear that the memoirs are not simply nationalistic perspectives on World War I.

As figures "arising out of culturally, ethnically and religiously very mixed milieus who responded and adapted to the enormous economic, social and political changes which shook the region," ⁵⁹ the six memoirists seem to have been engaged in an intellectual struggle that unfolded in the Arab East after the war for control over discourses about the past parallel to the political battles for predominance in the present. ⁶⁰ As the horror of World War I helped entrench the nationalist historiography of the 1920s and 1930s among Arabs, ⁶¹ memoirs were valuable grounds for exercising discursive power in order to form Arab perspectives on World War I. ⁶² Within the framework of political contentions for historical "truths," the varied assessments in these memoirs are complementary. They help us to understand not only the construction of nationalistic perspectives in the postwar Arab East but also the experience of adaptation and accommodation that many ex-Ottoman citizens had to go through in the years that followed the outbreak of World War I.

NOTES

- 1. Rashid Khalidi, Palestinian Identity, 87.
- 2. Since the publication of the first book of the series Arap Gözüyle Osmanlı in 2005, in addition to the six memoirs that are subject to this study, the memoirs of Rashid Rida, Muhammad Farid, and Jamal al-Din al-Afghani have also been published by Klasik Yayınları as part of the same series, making a total of nine books.
- Sati^c al-Husari uses this term in his introduction to the memoirs of Taha al-Hashimi in 1967, praising their value: "events recounted in his memoirs were recorded in their time of occurrence and not after the passage of a long time": Ṭaha al-Hāshimī, Mudhakkirāt, 15.
- 4. For a recently published example of Tamari's work in English, see Salim Tamari,

- Year of the Locust. The more extensive version of the book was published in Arabic in 2008: 'Âm al-Jarād.
- Amīr Shakīb Arslān, Sīrat Dhātiyah, 19. Arslan's memoirs as treated in this study refer to the compilation made by the publisher Dar al-Tali'ah from his personal documents written after World War I.
- Muḥammad Kurd ʿAlī, al-Mudhakkirāt, 1:3. Kurd ʿAli began writing his memoirs in 1939. The first three volumes were published in 1948–49, followed by a fourth volume in 1951.
- 7. Muḥammad 'Izzat Darwaza, Mudhakkirāt, 37. Darwaza began writing his memoirs in 1932 and continued to write until the very end of his life. This study makes use of the first volume of his voluminous memoirs published in 1993.
- 8. Salīm 'Alī Salam, Mudhakkirāt, 108. We do not know when exactly Salam wrote the manuscripts that Dr. Hassan 'Ali Hallaq published decades after Salam's death. But considering Salam's doubts about engaging in such a project after his notes were either burned or lost during World War I and after his documents and sources were confiscated by the French, it is safe to assume that he began writing his memoirs after World War I.
- Ja'far al-'Askarī, Mudhakkirāt, 5-7. Al-'Askari began writing his memoirs after World War I but was assassinated in 1936 before he could complete them for publication. Najdat F. Safwat prepared and edited his memoirs for the first publication in Arabic in 1988.
- 10. Compare 'Abdullah b. al-Ḥusayn (King 'Abdullah), Mudhakkirātī (Amman: al-Ahlīyah lil-Nashr wa-al-Tawzī 'Maktabat Barhūmah, 1989), 9, with King Abdallah of Jordan, My Memoirs Completed (al-Takmilah), 1. The first publication of the epilogue al-Takmilah in Arabic was in 1951 and was preceded by the first publication of Mudhakkirātī in 1945.
- 11. Salam, Mudhakkirāt, 192-93, 201.
- 12. This was a typical formulation at the time. Sadrazam Said Halim Paşa too, for instance, wrote in 1921 that at the outset of the war "personne n'ignorait plus que la Russie revait de la possession de Constantinople, que la France convoitait la Syrie et l'Angleterre l'Irak" (nobody denied anymore that Russia dreamed of possessing Constantinople, that France coveted Syria, and that England [coveted] Iraq): Said Halim Paşa, L'Empire Ottoman et la guerre mondiale, 17.
- 13. Salām, Mudhakkirāt, 202. Talat Paşa's reference here is to the Speaker of the parliament, Halil Menteşe. This reference was also a bid by Talat Paşa to establish the legitimacy of the decision made on the alliance.
- 14. al-'Askarī, Mudhakkirāt, 54.
- 15. Darwaza, Mudhakkirāt, 216-17.
- 16. Arslān, *Sīrat*, 123.
- 17. Ibid., 121. According to Arslan, Talat Paşa further noted the following: "We either side with the Germans and gain a strong friend or side with the Allies and keep away from their harm. But as far as we see, the Allies want neither to side with us nor to sign a treaty with us in order to preserve the Ottoman sultanate." Indeed, Arslan's words concur with Talat Paşa's statements in his own memoirs, where he refers to the alliance with Germany as a necessity for survival: "We were all convinced that an alliance with a European state was necessary in order for Turkey to preserve its existence": Talat Paşa, *Talat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 20–21. The political

and intellectual elite at the time perceived the Ottoman Empire to be engaged in a final struggle of life and death, in which Ottomans had to embrace an unfaltering patriotism if they wanted to live and live honorably. See Mustafa Aksakal, "Not 'by Those Old Books of International Law," 515.

- 18. Arslān, *Sīrat*, 260.
- 19. Ibid., 124.
- 20. The Battle of the Marne, fought between September 5 and 12, 1914, resulted in an Allied victory against the German Army and led to a stalemate on the Western Front, as it stopped the German army's push toward Paris.
- 21. 'Abdullah, *Mudhakkirātī*, 98–99, 106.
- 22. Ibid., 103.
- 23. al-ʿAskarī, *Mudhakkirāt*, 99, 100.
- 24. Salām, Mudhakkirāt, 220, 218, 224.
- 25. Kurd ⁽Alī, *al-Mudhakkirāt*, 1:80, 125, 107, 108, 157.
- 26. Arslān, Sirat, 155. In this regard Arslan makes an interesting remark in his memoirs on the Ottoman victory at Gallipoli, arguing that it stimulated the second wave of exiles and executions. According to Arslan, after Turkey defeated the great armies in Gallipoli the leading members of the CUP came to believe that whoever took command of matters in the country could do anything that he wanted. Cemal Paşa was thenceforth given the room and tolerance to carry out his policies in Syria: Arslān, Sirat, 154–55.
- 27. Ibid., 160-61.
- 28. Even the mutasarrif of Mount Lebanon, Ohannes Paşa, appealed to Arslan to intervene for Amir Fa'ik Sa'd Shihab, for instance. Arslan claims to have responded by saying that he would intervene for all the prisoners at 'Aleyh: Arslān, *Sīrat*, 152.
- 29. Ibid., 168-69, on the train to Medina; and 174-77, in Damascus.
- 30. Ibid., 151.
- 31. Darwaza, Mudhakkirāt, 244, 259, 260.
- 32. Keith David Watenpaugh, "Cleansing the Cosmopolitan City," 3.
- 33. Fromkin's and Kayalı's remarks about such appropriations may be considered representative in this regard: David Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace*, 15; and Hasan Kayali, *Arabs and Young Turks*, 145.
- 34. Arslān, *Sīrat*, 216.
- 35. Ibid., 287-88.
- 36. Kayali, *Arabs and Young Turks*, 145 (emphasis added).
- 37. Al-'Askarī, *Mudhakkirāt*, 104–5. Al-'Askari mentions that King Husayn's representative to conscript volunteers for the revolt considered him to be an Ittihadist at first, due to his relation to Enver Paşa: al-'Askarī, *Mudhakkirāt*, 103.
- 38. Ibid., 105-7, 144.
- 39. Darwaza, Mudhakkirāt, 218, 223-24.
- 40. In his narrative of a conversation with Rida al-Rikabi and 'Abdulrahman Shahbandar in Damascus following the hardships that Ottomans experienced in the Gallipoli War, Kurd 'Ali tells his audience that Shahbandar informed him of the necessity of thinking about the future of their homeland and establishing a secret society that could contact the British. He replied by asking: "How do we know that the state won't be victorious at the end?": Kurd 'Alī, al-Mudhakkirāt, 1:111.
- 41. 'Abdullah, *Mudhakkirātī*, 75–77.

- 42. See the letter that Kitchener wrote to Sir Edward Grey, (the foreign secretary at the time) dated February 6, 1914, right after he met with 'Abdullah, quoted in Elie Kedourie, *In the Anglo-Arab Labyrinth*, 4–5.
- 43. King 'Abdullah, Mudhakkirātī, 108.
- 44. Kedourie, *In the Anglo-Arab Labyrinth*, 5–6.
- 45. Kamal Salibi, The Modern History of Jordan, 116.
- 46. 'Abdullah, Mudhakkirātī, 249-50.
- 47. al-'Askarī, Mudhakkirāt, 170.
- 48. What came to be known as the Sykes-Picot Agreement was reached in secret in May 1916 between Sir Mark Sykes of Great Britain and François Georges-Picot of France with the assent of imperial Russia, in order to craft spheres of control for imperial powers in Asia Minor and the Arab East if the Ottoman Empire was successfully defeated. The agreement had created considerable discontent among many Arabs ever since its disclosure by the Bolsheviks on November 23, 1917, as its implementation would make Arab independence and unity virtually impossible. Adding to the conflicting promises of the British government with lasting impact was the famous Balfour Declaration, in which British foreign secretary Arthur J. Balfour declared to Baron Walter Rothschild on November 2, 1917, that the British government viewed the establishment of a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine with favor and would endeavor to facilitate this project.
- 49. Saudis took control of the Hijaz in 1925, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was established in 1932. King 'Abdullah held the Saudis responsible for the lost ideal of Arab unity and the troubles that the Arabs would face in the future: see the section "Wahhabism and Wahabists: War and Destiny" in King 'Abdullah, *Mudhakkirātī*, 160-69.
- 50. Ibid., 167–68.
- 51. Salibi, The Modern History of Jordan, 166.
- 52. Darwaza, Mudhakkirāt, 272-73.
- 53. Kurd 'Ali describes himself as having addressed Faysal with the second person plural *kaltum*, apparently referring not just to Faysal but to the Hashemites in general: Kurd 'Alī, *al-Mudhakkirāt*, 1:233.
- 54. Ibid.
- 55. Aḥmad Amin, "Mudhakkirāt al-ustādh," 6-9.
- 56. Salām, Mudhakkirāt, 230.
- 57. Kamal Salibi, A House of Many Mansions, 169.
- 58. Arslān, *Sīrat*, 138, 139–40.
- 59. A. Holly Shissler. Between Two Empires, 5, on figures such as Ahmet Ağaoğlu.
- 60. This was similar to the intellectual struggle that unfolded in the successor states to the Habsburg Empire after 1918: Gergely Romsics, Myth and Remembrance, 173.
- Karl K. Babir, "Memory, Heritage, History: Ottomans and Arabs," in Carl L. Brown, ed., *Imperial Legacy*, 105.
- 62. Nuri al-Sa'id, a leading ex-Ottoman officer in the Sharifian army who later served fourteen times as the prime minister of Iraq, in 1947 explicitly underlined the value of memoirs in writing the history of, for instance, the Arab Revolt: "Indeed I believe that the history of the Arab Revolt is not complete without all of its participants recording their memoirs, and it is the compilation of those memoirs that will be the complete history of the Arab Revolt": Nūrī al-Sa'īd, Mudhakkirāt, 16.

Ottoman and German Imperial Objectives in Syria during World War I

Synergies and Strains behind the Front Lines

Hasan Kayalı

During World War I eastern Anatolia, Mesopotamia, and Syria were war zones that witnessed sustained and devastating combat, dire disruption of civilian life, and demographic dislocation with earth-shaking implications for the Ottoman state and society. Ultimate Ottoman defeats in the southern fronts followed by Franco-British occupation had momentous consequences by separating Syria, Iraq, and Arabian territories from the empire. Geopolitical outcomes in the eastern fronts were less exacting, indeed at the end favorable to the empire, despite ruinous defeats, immeasurable human cost, and the drastic transformation of the social makeup of the region. Greater Syria differs from the other war zones in its distinctive military-administrative reorganization under a wartime governorate, presided by Ahmed Cemal Paşa. It also stands out because the Ottomans' German wartime ally played a greater role in the region—in field command and combat logistics as well as behind the battle lines—than anywhere else in the Middle East.

Wartime developments in Syria and the German involvement in the region are obfuscated in scholarship due to entrenched historiographical tendencies that conspire against an accurate appraisal unencumbered by Eurocentric, nation-centered, apologetic, or triumphalist history writing. Looking through the cracks of established historical paradigms and inevitable distortions arising from diverse exigencies of historical memory and responsibility, it is possible to strive for an assessment that complicates received wisdom about the imperative to preserve and recover empire while throwing further light on Ottoman Syria during the war.

The attempt to portray any aspect of the wartime Middle East is handicapped by the relative paucity of historical studies pertaining to the region within the general scholarship on World War I, a problem that this volume seeks to address. The predominant framework in World War I studies is that of a European war, notwithstanding the subsequent characterization of the conflict as a world war. The consideration of the warfare outside of Europe rarely breaks out of the view that portrays extra-European manifestations as mere side theaters within the logic of colonial rivalries and worthy of attention only as such. The long-standing trend of contraction of the Ottoman territories, the steady weakening of the state, and the European penetration of its economy by the beginning of the twentieth century have put in question the empire's relevance and validated the historiographical marginalization. Thus, even as histories acknowledge the Ottoman background to the conflicts that triggered the war and the nationalist and imperialist struggles over the empire's patrimony, they pay little attention to Ottoman participation in the war in its own right or to the war's impact and consequences in the Middle East, which arguably were more considerable than anywhere else. The truncated Ottoman Empire, which was still larger than any other European country except Russia, had more war fronts than the territory of any other belligerent. These theaters of war witnessed a large portion of the global warfare and wartime casualties. Yet the Ottoman Empire's status in World War I remains one of "also-fought," consigned to outlying chapters and footnotes in general histories.² Existing accounts are generally grounded in diplomatic and political history and therefore inevitably privilege the center, offering little guidance in the investigation of the provinces' war experience. In short, the marginalization of the Middle Eastern theaters of World War I in the general historical scholarship has subverted a thorough examination of wartime Ottoman politics and society, especially outside the imperial capital.

Related to the Eurocentric standpoint in historical examinations of the wartime Middle East is the assumption of German primacy and influence in the Ottoman Empire. The Ottomans entered the war as an economically and militarily weaker partner within the alliance of the Central Powers next to Austria-Hungary and Germany. The growth of German presence and influence in the Middle East, which brought German military personnel, technology, and materiel to the Ottoman Empire, was an anticipated consequence of the military alliance. Large numbers of German military officers and advisors, among them some of the most renowned generals of the German army, were active in the

Ottoman Empire and on Middle Eastern fronts during the war.³ The German role, however, was not hegemonic. Ottoman interests intersected and overlapped but at times also clashed with or remained outside the purview of German interests. As such, they need to be teased apart from the German and Austro-Hungarian war aims with an eye to restoring the agency of the Ottoman actor by interrogating some assumptions of relevant historiographical traditions. These assumptions are not based solely on wartime dynamics but are also colored by a trend of long-standing and increasing German influence in the empire since the late 1800s.

Germany cultivated these relations from the standpoint of its quest to become a power with overseas reach and influence. It viewed the efforts to bring to the Ottoman Empire such technological advances as railways and technical and institutional knowhow, embodied in the variety of technical and military missions, from a vantage point of dominance. War only intensified the paternalistic relationships and accentuated the status of the Ottoman Empire as the junior partner in the relationship. This view, fostered by contemporary German officers, officials, and adventurers, long suffused depictions of the wartime Ottoman-German relationship. Both the champions and the detractors of the righteousness of the German war effort aggrandized the role of Germans in the Ottoman Empire as either benevolent wardens or manipulative exploiters. The historical works produced elsewhere in the West, and in particular in the countries of the Triple Entente, reinforced the notion of German hegemony and reflect a preoccupation with Germany as the main adversary with ambitions as a world power and tentacles firmly around the Middle East.⁴ From the perspective of Western European observers, Germany is the natural culprit-of-choice to assign responsibility for Ottoman participation in the war, although London, Paris, and St. Petersburg rebuffed multiple Ottoman initiatives from Ottoman leaders desperate to secure an alliance and thus drove the Porte toward Germany.

The focus on the determinative role of Germany in the course of war and consequently in the Ottoman Empire's wartime predicament is shared by Turkish historiography as well. Mustafa Kemal's ardent denunciation of the Unionist leaders in an effort to separate himself and his associates from those who held the reins from 1914 to 1918 opened the path to the demonization of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) leadership, among whose sins was submission to German dictates. The anti-Unionist historiography of the early Turkish Republic has placed the responsibility of Ottoman entry into the war squarely on the shoulders of Enver Paşa, depicted as a stooge of Germany. The skillful

neutrality of the Turkish government at a vastly different conjuncture during World War II despite similar pressures has served to highlight the missteps of the Ottoman government in 1914. German guile and Enver's pro-German proclivity were accepted by this historiography as determining the outcome of a patently ruinous alliance with Germany in which the Unionist leadership subordinated itself to Germany and Ottoman interests to German ones.⁵

One of the central debates in the historiography of modern Germany has centered on Germany's responsibility for the outbreak of the war. This debate has also had implications for Ottoman agency in the empire's entry into war. In contrast to the view held by many mainstream German historians that Germany was forced to go to war for defensive purposes in the face of British and French colonial expansionism,⁶ Fritz Fischer advanced the thesis that Germany provoked the war to attain world hegemony, which suggests that the Ottoman Empire was dragged into the war by a Germany with grandiose aims, including the subjugation of the empire. According to Fischer, "Turkey" had "the duty of severing communications between Russia and the Black Sea and the western allies" and "was also meant to act as a springboard from which Germany should attack ... India and Egypt."

If Eurocentrism and presumption of German overbearance have promoted the view of determinative German influence in the empire's political and military fortunes, nationalist vantages spawned and nourished in modern Middle Eastern states have obscured the portrayals of the Middle East during World War I in other ways, eliciting fragmented and skewed representations in line with the exigencies of national historical memory. In republican Turkish histories World War I has significance to the extent that it constitutes a foil to the redemptive War of Independence of 1918-22. It is a woeful Ottoman defeat from which modern Turkey was redeemed by disassociating itself from the empire's decrepit institutions and its legacy. Turkish history elevates Turkey's birth out of imperial ashes thanks to the genius of its founding father. Thus the outcome of World War I carries great significance, but the war itself has commanded little scholarly attention until recently, beyond pedantic military histories. The need to shun responsibility for the messy episodes of World War I exacerbated the reluctance to investigate and understand the war. Wartime documentary depositories inherited by modern Turkey were embargoed by the republican governments until the 1990s, making research difficult for anyone who wished to explore the war years. Constructing a sharp historical divide at the end of 1918 or, in

even more contrived fashion, in May 1919, Turkish history has disowned the war years, with the exception of flashbacks to the glorious defense at Gallipoli in 1915 under Mustafa Kemal's command. Historians outside of Turkey, who have no reason to share the sensibilities of the Turkish government but have been ideologically drawn to the project of Kemalist modernity, were long complicit in the neglect that came with the glorification of the phoenix rising out of the ashes. They were also handicapped by the restrictions placed on archival materials. Only in recent years has there been a rise in scholarship on World War I together with a more nuanced appraisal of its legacy.

Even when historians gloss over the war years in writing the history of Turkey, many subscribe to the notion of the inexorable rise of Turkish nationalism since its late nineteenth century beginnings, if not before, and its preponderance in Istanbul during World War I. In this view the tension between Ottomanism and ethnic nationalism was once and for all resolved in favor of nationalism after the Balkan Wars of 1912–13. Ottomanism had been conceived as an ideology to energize the loyalty of non-Muslims and the connection of the non-Muslim peoples to the Ottoman state. Wars, rebellion, and Great Power intervention in Christian majority provinces undermined the project. Subsequently Turkish, Arab, Kurdish, and Albanian intellectuals articulated atavistic ethnic pride that also gripped the imagination of segments of the political elites. It is widely held that the Young Turk regime thus fell back with a vengeance upon Turkish nationalism. Overemphasis on such a transformation, which amounts to the abandonment of the imperative to preserve the empire (or the implementation of an improbable and unviable Turkicization of the Ottoman polity), pervades the scholarship and distorts Ottoman war aims. The distortion has particular implications for the examination of Greater Syria in the war. It suggests that the separation or loss of Syria may have been viewed as a foregone conclusion (if not a desirable eventuality) at the time, a contention interrogated below. Furthermore this very vantage point that privileges Turkish nationalism implicates Germany as the enabler of a monoethnic "Turkey."8

World War I is central in the founding narratives of modern Arab states, in contrast to modern Turkey. In these histories Turkish oppression is a central trope that provides the generative "other" for Arab nationalisms. Thus Arab nationalist historiography has reinforced the notion of the implementation of a hegemonic Turkish-centric agenda in the Arab provinces. This vantage point obscures inherent ambivalences in political identity and imperial allegiances among a multitude of Arab

groups.⁹ It privileges resistance by infusing it with anachronistic nationalist content. Indeed it deploys this resistance in the mobilization of an Arab nationalism in the interwar period against European imperialism, which is held to be a second stage of foreign domination and oppression following Turkish domination. Thus both Turkish and Arab national narratives reinforce each other and disassociate the Arab provinces from the Ottoman framework.

While an explanatory framework of World War I, indeed of the last two decades of the empire, overdetermined by Turkish nationalism has been viewed increasingly critically in recent years, 10 the conventional views have been reinforced from another direction: the burgeoning field of genocide studies. Works addressing the Armenian genocide have proliferated, generating increasingly more textured accounts of the wartime massacres. These studies examine genocide as a distinctive phenomenon of modernity and tend to privilege the frame of racialist ethnonationalism in the investigation of genocide in general and the Armenian massacres in particular. 11 The exclusionary acts of the Young Turk governments and their accomplices directed against the non-Muslims emerge as part of a broader Turkish nationalist thrust that beleaguered all non-Turkish groups. Violence was indeed pervasive in the empire, in particular against Christian groups. The persecution of Christians paralleled, even served, an imperial project conceived to integrate the empire's Muslims and to rally them around state patriotism and symbolic allegiance to the monarchy for the preservation of the empire.

Genocide scholars have also tended to aggrandize the German role in the Ottoman Empire in the effort to plumb the roots of the Holocaust in the earlier genocides of the twentieth century. Not only do they characterize the Armenian massacres as the first modern genocide (thus constituting a template for the Holocaust), but they also probe German culpability on the familiar assumption that Germany held sway over Istanbul and beyond. In his book devoted to the exploration of the German role, Vahakn Dadrian seeks to establish German culpability in the extermination of Armenians. He points to the involvement of the top German brass in the issuance of deportation orders, Kaiser Wilhelm's systematic disregard of atrocities starting with the massacres of the 1890s, and implicit condoning of similar acts by German authorities in 1915-16 by way of nonintervention or toothless protests. 12 Dadrian also plants the seeds of a direct connection between the Armenian genocide and the Holocaust by tabulating officers who served both the Wilhelmine empire in its last years and Hitler's army. Scholars who endeavor a more

nuanced appraisal of German involvement point to German cultural relativism, which regarded Muslim "Oriental savagery" as par for the course, in the attempt to place the massacres out of the sight and mind of the home public. ¹³ Once the close scrutiny and recognition that the Holocaust has received situated it in the novel category of genocide, it became a template that validates past acts of mass murder as genocide. Continuity from the 1904 genocide in Germany's Namibian colony in South Africa via the Armenian genocide to the Holocaust is a subject of heated debate among European historians and genocide scholars as far as linkages between twentieth century genocides and the German role in them are concerned. ¹⁴ Too close a genealogical or paradigmatic linkage between the Armenian genocide and the Holocaust, however, has had collateral damage for the appraisal of the German role in the Ottoman Empire during the war and the force of ethnonationalism in the Middle East of the 1910s.

The Ottoman leadership saw an opportunity in the war and the German alliance to reconstruct the empire and to consolidate its authority and legitimacy damaged by secession, annexation, and military defeats. The towns of Greater Syria, especially Damascus, Beirut, and Jerusalem, were centers of emergent Arab nationalist thought and activity. Prior to the outbreak of war the relationship of the Syrian provinces to the center already had begun to be contested by Arabist intellectuals and movements. The Ottoman center had needed to negotiate reform programs advanced by local elites in these provinces that were seeking a greater degree of autonomy. During the war the enhanced need to maintain government authority and military control accompanied repression and bred dissent, which was at times expressed in the idiom of an Arab nationalism reactive to "Turkish" oppression and misrule. This necessitated further surveillance and stricter governance in the region. Istanbul's project to reassert its power in outlying imperial territories such as the Hijaz and Yemen would start with greater integration of Syria as the gateway to the Ottoman periphery.

Germany supported the territorial integrity of an Ottoman Empire that extended to the Red Sea and Persian Gulf in line with its *Weltpolitik*, the linchpin of which was to check British colonial expansion. Syria was the interface of German-British rivalry in Asia, especially after the failed completion of the Berlin-Baghdad Railway, envisaged by Berlin to pose a more direct challenge to Britain near India. Despite gaps the railway had been extended to northern Syria and offered utility in strengthening the Syrian fronts and checking and challenging British presence in

Egypt. The invasion of Egypt from Syria would allow a German thrust into Africa and open "a door for invading Uganda and British East Africa." Syria as the base of the Egyptian operations was a primary site where the quest to attain German and Ottoman war aims played out and intersected. Thus emerged a symbiotic cooperation, if not "extreme reciprocity," between Istanbul and Berlin at the crux of the geopolitical interests of both states. ¹⁶

The course of Ottoman-German relations since the nineteenth century is relevant to the alliance concluded between Germany and the Ottoman Empire in 1914 but was not a logical consequence of closer relations that went back to the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The pivotal point in the history of these relations is the 1878 Berlin Congress, which marked the collapse of the Concert of Europe and unleashed New Imperialism. Throughout most of the nineteenth century Britain and France's dual agenda of taking advantage of Middle Eastern markets while keeping at bay Russian expansionism into the Balkans and beyond had necessitated the shoring up of the Ottoman state. The strategic and economic interests of both France and Britain in the Ottoman Empire reinforced each other until the 1870s. The Berlin Treaty, which marked the collapse of this relationship, was a disaster for the Ottomans mitigated by Bismarck's diplomacy. As the proverbial "honest broker" of the Berlin Congress, Bismarck played a role in limiting the damage to Ottoman sovereignty and territorial integrity, which gained Germany favor in Istanbul.

The development of Ottoman-German economic, diplomatic, cultural, and military relations in the following decades is well known. The premise of the intensifying relations was Germany's assumption of Britain's former role in protecting the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire in order to safeguard German foreign policy goals.¹⁷ Despite his key role at Berlin, Bismarck is generally known as not having favored close relations with the Ottoman Empire: he famously declared that the Eastern Question was not "worth the bones of a single Pomeranian grenadier."18 While historians have questioned the stance embodied in this colorful line, Germany's proactive furtherance of relations with the Ottoman Empire is owed to Kaiser Wilhelm's interest in the Near East and friendly relations with Sultan Abdülhamid, highlighted by the kaiser's two trips to the Ottoman Empire in 1889 (the very first by the leader of a European power) and 1898. 19 These trips bracket the maturation of a Middle Eastern policy (Orientpolitik) in the context of the broader Wilhelmine Weltpolitik. For Germany the Ottoman domains offered strategic advantages, which became increasingly concrete with the advancing construction of the Berlin-Baghdad Railway through Asia Minor.

An overview of the progress of Ottoman-German relations from the 1880s to 1914 may suggest the inevitability of the German-Ottoman war alliance. German economic stakes in the empire, however, though on the rise, paled in comparison with those of Britain and France in this period. The Young Turk Revolution of 1908 placed Ottoman-German relations in uncertain territory, especially after the deposition of Abdülhamid in 1909. The leadership cadres of the ascendant Committee of Union and Progress included young officers beholden to Germany as beneficiaries of the modern military education set in place by General Colmar von der Goltz, who had been dispatched by Berlin in 1883 to revamp Ottoman military training. Both this group of officers and the civilian cadres resented Germany's support of ally Austria-Hungary's annexation of Bosnia in 1909 and favored keeping the empire's diplomatic options open. German involvement in the training of the Ottoman army officers resumed with the arrival of a mission led by Otto Liman von Sanders in December 1913,²⁰ but the Ottoman leadership counter balanced that relationship with prior agreements with Britain and France for reform of the Ottoman navy (Admiral Limpus) and gendarmerie (General Baumann), respectively.

Nor did Germany's foreign or colonial policy compel an Ottoman-German alliance in 1914. In view of grandiose designs such as the *Drang* nach Osten, Mitteleuropa, Weltpolitik, Lebensraum, and "peaceful penetration" spawned in Berlin in the context of Germany's belated entry into the colonial race,²¹ its close relationship with the weak but sovereign Ottoman Empire could be interpreted in the context of colonial expansion. German colonization of Ottoman territories had been invoked before and after Germany entered the colonial race and in particular in relation to the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire. Settlement projects pioneered by religious groups in Palestine were forerunners of the colonization impulse. The Templars started building their colony just before German unification, and German Zionist groups promoted Jewish settlement after the turn of the century. The Deutsche Palästinebank was founded in 1899 and built several branches in the Beirut and Damascus provinces and in the independent sanjak of Jerusalem.²² German attempts to gain strategic advantage in the Ottoman Empire fell short of a colonizing project that deployed coercive power premised on cultural hegemony.

The centerpiece of German reach into the Ottoman Empire, the Berlin-Baghdad Railway, brought modest results in expanding German commercial penetration. The railway was emblematic of the growing bond between Germany and the Ottoman Empire. But Germany had to negotiate Ottoman law and desires on the one hand and Great Power apprehensions about the project on the other. A recent study of the Berlin-Baghdad Railway argues that its construction and operation were riddled with disputes and "rather than bringing the two cultures together...created fractures in the Turco-German relationship." In 1913 German expansionism appeared innocuous even to London. 24

The alliance signed between Berlin and Istanbul on August 2, 1914, placed the two countries on equal footing for the first time in history, bringing an era of Great Power dominance in the Ottoman Empire to an end. As the war progressed, the Porte learned to exploit its equal status, using the German interest in the Baghdad Railway to support its own imperial goals, implement reform programs, and make increasing demands on its Great Power allies.²⁵

Indeed Ottoman initiative was instrumental in the signing of the Ottoman-German agreement of August 2, 1914. The Germans' "hope of ultimately turning [the Ottoman Empire] into a pliable junior partner or outright satellite of the Reich was not nearly as pronounced as has often been claimed." ²⁶

In the summer of 1914 a marginally different interplay of diplomatic, military, and domestic contingencies might have tipped the configuration of the European alliances in different directions. In Istanbul and Berlin even those convinced of the wisdom of the Ottoman-German alliance were pulled by countervailing forces. Doubts about an alliance with a weak state prevailed in the minds of some German leaders and officers, as Kaiser Wilhelm threw in his weight on the side of an Ottoman alliance. Ottoman minister of finance Cavid Bey and minister of the navy Cemal favored neutrality or an alliance with the Entente. Even pro-German Enver broached an offer of alliance to Russia in August 1914. The dramatic events surrounding the Ottoman entry into the war on the side of Germany have obscured the sustained Ottoman diplomatic efforts in the French, British, and Russian capitals, prompting the kaiser to remark that the German influence in Istanbul was "already as good as nil." 28

British confiscation of dreadnoughts in the fall of 1914 paid for by the Ottoman government and built in British dockyards, the entry of the

German vessels Goeben and Breslau into Ottoman waters through the Dardanelles chased by the British navy, and the two ships' bombardment of the Russian Black Sea ports mask Ottoman agency as a belligerent. In November 1914 the Ottomans entered the war on the side of Germany not because they were forced to but because they had no other choice that held the promise of upholding imperial interests in the conflagration of war.²⁹ After the outbreak of the war and Ottoman involvement in the hostilities, the imperial interests of both powers reinforced each other and often overlapped. The war exposed the empire to attack on multiple fronts. Ottoman dependence on German gold, materiel, and technical expertise resulted in a dramatic increase of German presence in the empire. Yet this cooperation was not devoid of tension. The pursuit of war aims by the two powers involved negotiation, bargaining, and triangulation. Differences in outlook as well as in matters of day-to-day collaboration came to the surface not only between German and Ottoman leaders but also within the Ottoman and German leadership in both the civilian and military cadres.³⁰ Enver Paşa's arrogation of the prerogative to assign German officers, bypassing Liman von Sanders, the chief of the mission, triggered a temporary crisis.³¹ The "high-handed manner" of General Erich von Falkenhayn, who took command of the Yıldırım armies toward the end of the war and was responsible for the decisive defeats of the Ottoman armies at the hands of General Allenby, "affronted the Turks and it also antagonized the Germans who had been in the region much longer than he." ³² Thus the dynamic of the Ottoman-German alliance was contingent on the course of the war in general, personalities at the interface of the relations, and the requisites of military operations depending on time and place.

Syria was at the crux of the dramatic transformations of the war and carried vital importance for Istanbul in the efforts to ensure the survival of the empire. It was exposed to enemy attack and infiltration from its Mediterranean coast and land border with British-controlled Egypt and served as the base for campaigns into Suez against British-occupied Egypt. It was the gateway to the Hijaz, where in 1916 the gravest domestic insurrection against the state broke out under the leadership of the Hashemite family of Mecca. Thus strengthening the forces of the center in Syria was necessary from the point of view of military strategy as well as buttressing government authority. The two unsuccessful campaigns against the Suez were organized in Syria, as were the campaigns further south into the Hijaz and Yemen. Even though the battles were not fought in Syrian land, these campaigns left a deep imprint on the social

and political life of Greater Syria, where a large number of the troops had been raised.³³ The hostilities disrupted the provisioning of food supplies, as the Ottoman 4th Army requisitioned crops and animals for its logistical needs. Syria was ravaged with famine, accompanied by mismanagement, profiteering, and a massive locust invasion.

Coastal Syria had long been a domain of French interest and intervention in the Middle East. With the outbreak of the war the Ottoman leadership became especially sensitive to French influence, as Cemal Paşa's severe punishment of France's local allies would demonstrate. The Ottoman-British interface along the Suez, however, was the defining element of Ottoman policy in Syria. The transformation in British foreign policy from being a protector of Ottoman territorial integrity to undermining the same became manifest nowhere more starkly than in Syria in the years prior to the war. The Ottoman leadership aimed at curbing British machinations and propaganda. The retrospective view of the war theaters in Syria and the Sinai reduces the war objective to the containment of the British in Egypt. According to this view, Germany sought to marshal the Ottoman military to a harassment of British forces in Egypt, which would, Germany hoped, necessitate a robust British military presence in the Suez zone and divert Allied troops from the European fronts. The two ill-fated campaigns against the Suez in 1915 and 1916 have generally been depicted as a gamble at best and a nihilistic exercise at worst, carried out with German inducement of a hapless Ottoman political leadership and military command. Yet to the Ottomans the war offered the prospect of dislodging the British from Egypt and reclaiming it for the empire. Action against the Suez had been considered in Istanbul even before the Ottoman entry into the war. Liman von Sanders says in his memoirs, perhaps with hindsight, that he tried to disabuse the Ottoman leadership of this idea but was advised by Berlin that "in the common interest an undertaking against Egypt is of great importance."34

The campaigns of the war, especially earlier ones, were driven less by desperation than by misplaced optimism. Success proved unrealistic and the campaigns resulted in failure, which has fostered simplistic explanations that portrayed the expeditions as quixotic ventures. Extensive Ottoman and German strategic planning and logistical preparation complete with the building of huge infrastructural efforts belie the notion of a suicidal harassment mission in Egypt. Both the German and Ottoman leaders were confident that internal revolts would destabilize British rule in Egypt and weaken the resolve to continue the occupation. Furthermore a two-pronged attack against Egypt from the east and the west

could have been decisive and did seem like a real possibility. The Ottomans abetted the attacks of the tribal forces of the Senussis from Libya into Egypt in what they hoped would be a war of attrition. While the British defeated the invading forces of the Senussis, a German-educated scion of the Ottoman family, Osman Fuat, led guerrilla and volunteer forces in Libya until the war's end.³⁵

Military fortification and logistical reinforcement of Syria was imperative in confronting the strong British presence in Egypt. Yet Ottoman policy was much more far reaching than military considerations. It served political goals and cultivated new ones. Not only did Syria's wartime defenses need to be strengthened, but its sociocultural integration within the empire had to be reinforced. Istanbul's objective was to defuse the nationalist currents and implement measures that would strengthen ties to the state while waging war against the British army. As commander of the 4th Army and governor general of Syria, Cemal Paşa worked closely with German officers and experts to attain the multiple aims. Contacts between Istanbul and Berlin as well as German espionage and propaganda in Egypt had started before even the formal conclusion of the alliance. In fact during the Libyan War the German agents in Cairo, including Baron Max von Oppenheim and Curt Prüfer, had engaged in propaganda in Egypt to recruit support for the Libyan resistance. In September 1914 Friedrich Kress von Kressenstein was dispatched to Damascus to organize the 8th Corps of the 4th Army for a campaign against Egypt, and Prüfer was appointed as an advisor. 36 The promotion of Ottoman efforts to establish authority and legitimacy in Syria was consistent with German interests.

The wartime devastation and suffering in Syria has constituted the centerpiece in the foundational narratives of the successor states that were carved out of Greater Syria, in particular Lebanon and Syria. A discourse of violence and punishment permeates existing accounts. These narratives stigmatize Cemal Paşa as someone who inflected the CUP's ideological stance with personal ambition and aggrandizement and implemented arbitrary, self-serving, and ultimately reckless policies in Syria. Cemal Paşa, known to several Arab generations by the epithet "Butcher," emerges as emblematic of "Turkish" rule in the Arab provinces. Carefully cultivated collective memory perpetuated and reinforced this characterization. A more thorough scrutiny of the historical record, however, elicits an appraisal that invests both CUP's and Cemal Paşa's policies with a broader imperial logic. The myths surrounding the persona of Cemal Paşa misrepresent Ottoman objectives in the empire's outlying

provinces. Cemal Paşa's elimination of political opponents with Arab nationalist proclivities was the central trauma etched indelibly in the minds of Syrians. Within months of his arrival in Syria at the end of 1914 he acted on documents confiscated in the French consulate in Beirut, which had been shut down after the declaration of war. The materials found implicated a number of Syrians in complicity with the French. These individuals were quickly tried, and many were sentenced to death. Scores of Syrians were publicly hanged in two installments in 1915 and 1916. Violence was not restricted to the executions. The government relocated thousands of Syrians identified as opponents and separatists to Anatolia. Cemal's attempt to smother political activity in Syria and to nip dissent in the bud paradoxically furthered Arab nationalist sentiment. These measures invoked the memory of violence that has nourished Arab nationalism.

Meanwhile the severe food shortage of 1915–18 decimated close to half a million Syrians. The eyewitness accounts and the war lore are replete with vivid accounts of children starving, men and women scrounging for pieces of grain in farm animals' excrement, consumption of fried locusts, and other terrible scenes. Cemal's critics saw his priority of provisioning and rationing the army as a deliberate punishment of the Syrian population. Public celebrations and parties (some organized to observe imperial holidays or other special occasions and to project stateliness) were frowned upon and resented by starving observers whose children were dying on the front and who saw such spectacles in which German officers and both sexes participated as dissonant with government propaganda elevating Muslim solidarity and promoting the holy war.

Seemingly arbitrary measures that caused hardships and extreme violence constituted only one aspect of Ottoman policy in Syria. Their counterpart was a set of initiatives that does not fit in with the coercive policy and the discourse of violence but was designed to serve the overall integrative objectives of the Ottoman state. Some of these efforts were inspired by German advisors and realized by German know-how, even as Ottoman imperial interests generated them. According to Ali Fuat Erden, Cemal kept some ten advisors, of whom at least five (those responsible for public health, antiquities, architecture, construction, and water) were Germans. One such officer, Theodor Wiegand, an archaeologist who was responsible for the preservation and cataloging of antiquities, left a valuable eyewitness account of Cemal's term in Syria. Dr. Peter Mühlens was responsible for public health issues. Maximilian Zürcher, of Swiss origin, was a well-educated architect and urban planner who

exerted more influence on Cemal than the others. 43 Arthur Salz, future professor of political science at Heidelberg University, entered Cemal Paşa's service as late as September 1917 to oversee a reform program.⁴⁴ Cemal Paşa and Ottoman experts, surrounded by German advisors, engaged in a comprehensive program of construction, urban improvement, and other infrastructural projects, 45 including a historical preservation program conceived as part of the effort to forge a new self-consciousness and preserve Syria for the empire. The projects strengthened imperial communications, specifically the physical links of Greater Syria with Anatolia, as they provided service to the local population. They complemented the well-known coercive policies and, like them, had a disciplinary thrust aimed at generating legitimacy. The extraordinary amount of effort and resources that went into these projects in the midst of the exigencies of war cannot be explained otherwise. The German army command provided not only the funds for much of this effort but also the technical expertise.

In the area of urban reconstruction, as in public works, many of the projects provided services necessary to sustain daily life. The material utility of other aspects of wartime urban planning, some of which at first sight appeared to be strictly cosmetic, was less obvious. A large amount of resources went into landscape architecture and urban improvements that allowed the state to insinuate its presence into the urban landscape. New urban arteries, most notably the avenues built in Damascus and Jaffa, were attempts to reorder urban space. The avenues become sites for "performances of power," such as the display of troops in parades and motorcades. Flags adorned the buildings and shops along the avenues during these parades, aimed at instilling loyalty to and identification with the state. Indeed the official social gatherings and festivities, criticized for their extravagance and violation of popular social norms and sensibilities, also served the purpose of making the state's power more visible.

Ottoman and German experts designed imposing public structures, government houses, squares, and fountains.⁴⁷ The unmistakable purpose was the enhancement of government authority through monumental reminders of the state's presence. Plans were put in place to construct a government house within the walls of Jerusalem and a cascade of wide steps climbing from the shoreline up to the government house on the hill in Beirut. Cemal Paşa personally gave specific instructions for the building of a fountain in front of the Hijaz Railway station in Damascus featuring lions, with one of them clutching a flag in its paw.⁴⁸ These structures would not only set the stage for stately entries but also reinforce imperial

symbols and grandeur in the consciousness of the people. Many of these projects remained uncompleted, as the war took a turn for the worse.

In order to further legitimacy and generate loyalty, the Ottoman state reinforced its role as educator. In the main towns of Damascus, Beirut, and Jerusalem several educational institutions at all levels were set up during World War I.⁴⁹ An Islamic academy opened in Jerusalem in 1915. The project to build such a school had been long-standing. Ground had been broken for the building not in Syria but in Medina in 1913. The new academy in Jerusalem was named after Salahaddin al-Ayyubi, neither an Ottoman nor an Arab, invoking his struggle against the Crusaders. The patronage of the legacy of Salahaddin posited the Ottomans as his successors in the defense of Islam against Christian encroachments.⁵⁰ This Islamic institution of learning was only one facet of the Ottoman educational program in Syria during World War I. The other addressed the requisites of modern secular state education. Cemal Paşa opened professional schools: an agricultural school in Baka^ca and a teacher's school in Aleppo. 51 The "layers of Islamic and secular" public education, vocational schools, and girls' schools were meant to "systematize Ottoman ideology" and embody diverse values of citizenship. 52

If education offered a strategy of control in buttressing the legitimacy of the existing order by way of inculcation of the values of the state, the manipulation of the press came a close second. The press policy was also two-faceted. First, Cemal harnessed the newspapers to weaken Arabist sentiment and to strengthen imperial loyalties. Second, the newspapers served the purpose of propagating religious propaganda to promote the "holy war," which the sultan declared at the outset of war. Cemal patronized the leading papers of Syria with monthly subventions, the amount of subsidy depending on the impact and past oppositional stance of the paper. During the war years the Ottoman government came to appreciate the uses that the press can serve and to realize that in Syria a controlled press dwelling on religious themes could defuse the influence of a group of Arabist journalists. 53 Cemal embraced such an initiative and cultivated relationships with some newspaper owners and editors. He urged that al-Muqtabas and al-Mufid, the two leading opposition papers of Damascus and Beirut with Arabist sympathies, should also be approached and insisted that stipends should be paid from his headquarters to achieve the best results.

Cemal was keen on establishing his personal patronage of Syrian leaders, but he did so with the endorsement of Istanbul.⁵⁴ He insisted that there should not be direct German involvement in the cultivation

of the press. The Germans supplied much of the printing paper and were interested in taking an active part in the project. Von Oppenheim wanted to sponsor a newspaper in Damascus. The German propaganda campaign coordinated under his direction both facilitated and came in conflict with the Ottoman efforts, exposing another area of cooperation and contestation. Finally Cemal proposed that a new official newspaper should be set up in Damascus, in addition to co-opting major Syrian papers. The new wartime propaganda organ, the newspaper *al-Sharq* (East), declared its aim to be "the enlightenment of Muslims inside and outside of the empire." ⁵⁵

The least-known of Ottoman wartime projects in Syria was historical preservation. The concerted effort to preserve, renovate, and publicize the monuments of Syria was even more intriguing than the urban renovation program against the background of war but served similar purposes. Cemal commissioned a survey of historical sites and monuments—not only the Ottoman and older Islamic buildings but structures from the entire historical heritage of the region. Pictures and descriptions (in German and Ottoman) of some diverse sites were published in a book as Alte Denkmäler aus Syrien (Old Monuments of Syria). 56 The book exemplifies the efforts to produce "a modern identity through the representation of select histories as appropriate for its needs of identity production." 57 Alte Denkmäler resembles a coffee-table book and does not reflect the scholarly work undertaken at some of the sites it displays. Large plates of exactly one hundred sites depict mosques of Damascus, Aleppo, and Jerusalem, temples of Petra and Palmyra, city walls, fortresses, the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, the Wailing Wall, and other sites. By the time the book was published Cemal had left his post. In the introduction that he penned in October 1917 he stated that as commander of the 4th Army he had the opportunity "to study the needs of this valuable part of my country and to contemplate the preservation and proper administration of its old monuments." The book, according to Cemal, presents to Ottoman citizens (rendered as "patriots" in the German translation) a number of the most wonderful treasures of their country.

The infiltration and rearrangement of both the urban landscape and the past, as well as the building of regular open streets, supervision of hygiene and public health, and "discipline of schooling," are within the sphere of disciplinary power that went in tandem with coercive powers and violence.⁵⁸ The Ottoman state availed itself in Syria of what Tony Bennett refers to as "the Janus face of power." As "the scaffolds terrorized the people into obedience," ⁵⁹ the schools and the press cultivated

authority and loyalty. Legitimacy derived from the utilization of the symbols of the past and the insertion of state power and rationality into the urban fabric.⁶⁰

The cultural, infrastructural, and ideological agenda that the Ottoman government implemented in Syria under the exigencies of war became moot when the Ottoman army lost on the battlefields and had to retreat to the north of Aleppo, ceding Greater Syria to British occupation forces. Even as the British were capturing Jerusalem at the end of 1917, renovation work was in progress in Aleppo, prompting a German officer to mutter that it was good of the paşa to be protecting the past as his army—given the dismal defeats by the British forces—was busy defying modernity.⁶¹

November 1917 was even more turbulent on the diplomatic front. Wartime alliances sustained shocks with the Russian revolution, withdrawal from the Entente war alliance, revelation of the terms of the Sykes-Picot Treaty, and the Balfour Declaration. As soon as the revolutionary government in Russia divulged the existence of Sykes-Picot in a denunciation of imperialistic schemes of the ancient regime and former allies, Cemal Paşa conveyed its contents to Faysal. On December 4 he made a plea for reconciliation to Sharif Husayn, 62 whose quest for his family's rule over the Arab lands was in jeopardy in light of the Sykes-Picot Treaty and the Balfour Declaration. In the heady days of cooperation with triumphant British forces in the Hijaz and Syria and British reaffirmation of pledges, Cemal's initiative failed. Linkages with the Ottoman government and the Anatolian movement would receive closer consideration by Arab groups as Arab political objectives were disappointed one after the other in the next two years.

The bias of historiographical hindsight that materialized against the reality of the defeat of the Central Powers and the dissolution of the European land empires, among them the Ottoman state, heavily colors the portrayal of wartime Ottoman internal affairs and foreign policy, including the alliance with Germany. Eventual defeat has discredited the validity and authenticity of both Ottoman and German war aims, blurred the intricacies of interaction between the allies, which included productive cooperation as well as contestation, and misrepresented the very contingencies of the making of the Ottoman-German alliance in 1914. Far from having been doomed or predetermined by the triumph of ethnonationalism—a notion central to retrospective visions of history in the Middle East and beyond—the Ottomans availed themselves of choices that go against the grain of these visions, as the Ottoman efforts to revive and

reinforce imperial allegiances in Syria in the cauldron of the war demonstrate. Just as the winners and losers of the war were not determined until the last year of combat in 1917–18, the time-honored political structures of Europe seemed unassailable until very late. Ottoman rule in Syria and the dynamics of the Ottoman alliance with Germany in this war zone suggest that the depiction of Ottoman leaders chafing under the weight of misguided decisions that they made during the war and the wrong partnerships that they concluded willy-nilly seems oversimplistic.

NOTES

- "[T]he crisis would never have unfolded as it did if not for the profound impact
 that the empire of the Turks had had on the development of Eastern Europe":
 G.J. Meyer, A World Undone, 86.
- For example, in his history of World War I John Keegan assigns one of the ten chapters to "The War beyond the Western Front," which devotes a few pages to the Middle East, in large part to the Gallipoli front. John Keegan, *The First* World War.
- 3. For instance, Field Marshal Colmar von der Goltz, who had reorganized the Ottoman army from 1883 to 1896 and later left his post as governor of Germanoccupied Belgium in 1914, fought and died in Mesopotamia. Erich von Falkenhayn, former Prussian minister of war and chief of the General Staff of the German Army in 1914, briefly supplanted Cemal Paşa as commander of the army in Syria in 1917. Hans von Seeckt, who was appointed chief of staff in the Ottoman army command, led the Weimar army after the war. For a discussion of the important posts of some German officers and officials active in the empire before or after their terms of office in Germany, see Ulrich Trumpener, "Germany and the End of the Ottoman Empire," 114–16.
- 4. In his authoritative work on the German-Ottoman alliance during World War I, Trumpener challenges the certainties of German hegemony without elaborating on the dynamics of the relationship in Greater Syria: Ulrich Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire*, 1914–1918.
- 5. Mustafa Aksakal, The Ottoman Road to War in 1914, 11-14.
- 6. The historians of the German Democratic Republic are a notable exception. Lothar Rathmann, who does not support the idea of German innocence, denounces historians and German officials and officers involved in the Ottoman Empire during the war as "chief ideologues of an obscurantist offensive": Lothar Rathmann, Stossrichtung Nahost, 1914–1918.
- 7. Fritz Fischer, Germany's Aims in the First World War, 122. Fischer's analysis of the German responsibility focuses on the Mitteleuropa politics. The view of a weak and easily manipulated Ottoman government and military also was expressed retrospectively by Gen. Bronsart von Schellendorf in a report that he drafted in December 1917, where he referred to a Turkish role "full of sacrifices" (implicitly for Germany and the alliance) aimed at easing the pressures on the Western front

- by tying up 1.5 million enemy soldiers: Akdes Nimet Kurat, ed., *Birinci Dünya* Savaşı Sırasında Türkiye'de Bulunan Alman Generallerin Raporları, 22.
- Ernst Jäckh, Die deutsch-türkische Waffenbrüderschaft, 21; cited in George William Griffin III, "Ernst Jäckh and the Search for German Cultural Hegemony in the Ottoman Empire," 51.
- 9. Hasan Kayalı, Arabs and Young Turks.
- 10. Michael A. Reynolds, Shattering Empires; Salim Tamari, Year of the Locust.
- 11. Taner Akçam, From Empire to Republic; Fuat Dündar, Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi; Donald Bloxham, The Great Game of Genocide.
- 12. Vahakn N. Dadrian, *German Responsibility in the Armenian Genocide*; see also Hans-Lukas Kieser and Elmar Plozza, *Der Völkermord an den Armeniern, die Türkei und Europa*.
- 13. Margaret Lavinia Anderson, "Down in Turkey Far Away."
- 14. For the Namibian colony, see Jürgen Zimmerer, Von Windhuk nach Auschwitz?; for the Armenian genocide, see Wolfgang Gust, "Die Verdrängung des Völkermords an den Armeniern." The continuity thesis is posited as the central question of essays published by Volker Langbehn and Mohammad Salama, eds., German Colonialism. ix-xx.
- 15. Donald M. McKale, Curt Prüfer, 48.
- 16. Malte Fuhrmann ("Germany's Adventures in the Orient," 123) states that Ottoman-German relations have been characterized as "extreme reciprocity" or "extreme subjugation."
- Mustafa Gencer, Imperialismus und die orientalische Frage; İlber Ortaylı, Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Alman Nüfuzu.
- 18. Jehuda Wallach, "Bismark and the Eastern Questions: A Reassesment," in Wallach, ed. *Germany and the Middle East*, 1835–1939 (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 1975), 23–30.
- 19. Feroz Ahmad, "The Late Ottoman Empire," 28.
- Otto Liman von Sanders, Five Years in Turkey; Naim Turfan, Rise of the Young Turks, 308–11.
- 21. "Mitteleuropa was in essence the concept of a customs union protected by high tariffs to include Austria-Hungary, the Balkans, and Ottoman Turkey linked to the idea of a Berlin-to-Baghdad Railway": I. F. W. Beckett, The Great War, 1914–1918, 27. Drang nach Osten suggested an annexationist "push to the East." The concept of "living space" (Lebensraum) became a fixation of Hitler but "had been a prominent strand of German imperialist ideology since the 1890s.... It existed alongside, rather than blending with, the mainstream imperialist concentration on overseas trading colonies, encapsulated in the slogan of Weltpolitik": Ian Kershaw, Hitler 1889–1936, 248.
- 22. Trumpener, "Germany and the End of the Ottoman Empire," 112, 116, 119.
- 23. Jonathan McMurray, Distant Ties, 110.
- 24. Niall Ferguson, *The Pity of War*, 68–69.
- 25. McMurray, Distant Ties, 109.
- 26. Trumpener, "Germany and the End of the Ottoman Empire," 122.
- 27. Aksakal, The Ottoman Road to War in 1914, 127-29.

- 28. Fischer, Germany's Aims, 46.
- Ahmad, "The Late Ottoman Empire," 18; Aksakal, The Ottoman Road to War in 1914.
- 30. Differences among Ottoman leaders, and in particular among Enver Paşa, Talat Paşa, and Cemal Paşa, have been overemphasized. There was much more unanimity in the conduct of war and imperial affairs within the Ottoman leadership than has been portrayed, and there were frequent differences within the German leadership. Writing during the days after the decisive defeat of the Central Powers, von Seeckt described the Liman von Sanders military mission as the spoiled child of the Prussian Foreign Ministry, formed without the approval of von der Goltz and a burden in the German war effort: Kurat, *Birinci Dünya Savaşı Sırasında*, 68–69.
- 31. Liman von Sanders, 114-15.
- The reference is to the members of the Liman von Sanders mission: Hew Strachan, The First World War, 275.
- 33. According to Alexander Aaronsohn, 130,000 of 150,000 troops were raised in Palestine: Alexander Aaronsohn, *With the Turks in Palestine*; M. Metin Hülagü, *Pan-Islâmist Faaliyetler*, 108–9.
- 34. Liman von Sanders, 27.
- Stanford J. Shaw, The Ottoman Empire in World War I, 2:1752–58; Michael Gwynne Dyer, "The Turkish Armistice of 1918," part 1: "The Decision for a Separate Peace, Autumn, 1918," Middle Eastern Studies 8, no. 2 (May 1972): 168.
- 36. McKale, Curt Prüfer, 20-30.
- 37. For recent works in this direction, see M. Talha Çiçek, War and State Formation in Syria; Leila Tarazi Fawaz, A Land of Aching Hearts (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014), 240–60; and Nevzat Artuç, "Ahmed Cemal Paşa (1872–1922)."
- 38. Fuat Dündar, İttihat ve Terakki'nin Müslümanları İskan Politikası, 1913–1918; Şaban Ortak, Osmanlı'nın son Manevralarından Suriye ve Garbi Arabistan Tehciri.
- 39. Linda Schatkowski-Schilcher, "The Famine of 1915–1918 in Greater Syria"; Najwa Qattan, "Safarbarlik"; Tamari, *Year of the Locust*; Elizabeth Thompson, *Colonial Citizens*, 19–30; Fawaz, *A Land of Aching Hearts*, 96–114; Çiçek, *War and State Formation*, 232–50.
- 40. Tamari, Year of the Locust, 108-110.
- 41. Ali Fuad Erden, Birinci Dünya Harbinde Suriye Hatıraları, 136
- 42. Theodor Wiegand, Marie Wiegand, and Gerhard Wiegand, *Halbmond im letzten Viertel*.
- 43. Ibid., 136-42.
- 44. Cemal Paşa, *Hatıralar*, 402. Salz was the editor of Cemal Paşa's memoirs in German translation: Johannes Fried, "Zwischen 'Geheimem Deutschland' und 'geheimer Akademie der Arbeit," 284–85.
- 45. Hasan Kayalı, "Wartime Regional and Imperial Integration of Greater Syria."
- 46. Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum*, 21.
- 47. Çiçek, War and State Formation, 191–94.
- 48. Wiegand et al., Halbmond im letzten Viertel, 232-33.
- 49. Çiçek, War and State Formation, 180-90.

- 50. Martin Strohmeier, al-Kullīya aṣ-Ṣalāḥīya in Jerusalem.
- 51. Kayalı, "Wartime Regional and Imperial Integration," 302-3.
- 52. Wendy M. K. Shaw, Possessors and Possessed, 24.
- 53. Rashid Khalidi, "Ottomanism and Arabism in Syria before 1914," in *The Origins of Arab Nationalism*, edited by Rashid Khalidi, Lisa Anderson, Muhammad Muslih, and Reeva S. Simon, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 50–69.
- 54. Askeri Tarih ve Stratejik Etüt Başkanlığı/Turkish General Staff Military History Archives, Ankara (hereafter ATASE)/WWI (World War I) 531/843 2078,no. 2-2; Cemal Paşa to the Ministry of War (June 16, 1915).
- 55. Ibid., nos. 2-7, 2-8. Cemal Paşa to Enver Paşa (Minister of War) (September 8, 1915).
- 56. Alte Denkmäler aus Syrien, Palästina und Westarabien (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1918); Çiçek, War and State Formation, 194–96.
- 57. Shaw, Possessors and Possessed, 28.
- 58. Timothy Mitchell, Colonising Egypt, 71-5.
- 59. Bennett, The Birth of the Museum, 21.
- 60. Selim Deringil, The Well-Protected Domains, 27.
- 61. Wiegand et al., Halbmond im letzten Viertel, 266.
- Zeine Zeine, The Struggle for Arab Independence, 21; Çiçek, War and State Formation, 63–66.

From Ottoman Lebanon to the French Mandate

The End of the "Long Peace"?

Francesco Mazzucotelli

The bullet-ridden statue that now stands in the middle of Martyrs' Square in downtown Beirut commemorates eleven Lebanese dignitaries and intellectuals who were sentenced to death by an Ottoman court-martial and executed in Beirut on August 21, 1915. Among them was 'Abd al-Karim al-Khalil, a close friend of the Ottoman military governor, Cemal Paşa. In his memoirs, published in 1922, Cemal recounts the deterioration of the relation with his former friend because of his role in the Beirut-based al-Jam'ciyya al-Islahiyya (Reform Society):

After my first return from the first expedition against the Canal nothing happened to shake my confidence in the reformers.... One day I asked Abdul Kerim el Halil if he could explain the contrast between the loyalty of the reformers of Syria and Beirut and the base allegations made by men like Refik el Azmet and others who were regarded as leaders. In some confusion he tried to give me an answer, but it was perfectly obvious that my question had greatly frightened him....

As a matter of fact, while Abdul Kerim el Halil and Riza Bey el Sulk were fomenting disorder several not unimportant attempts on Tyre and Sidon were made by the enemy's vessels employed in watching the coast. From time to time and for no apparent reason men were landed from these ships to destroy the telegraph lines, but each time they were driven back to their ships by our gendarmes. The discovery of these traitorous activities showed the aim and purpose of the enemy's operations, and henceforth I, of course, considered it would be simply fatuous on my part to place

any further trust in the reformers. I decided to take ruthless actions against the traitors....

The trials of Abdul Kerim el Halil and his accomplices took place in the months of June and July. As they proceeded, the criminal aims of the revolutionaries became abundantly clear. The wider range of their plotting simply astounded me. At this time the only troops of Syria were Arab regiments, and if these had mutinied I should have had nothing with which to quell the revolt. The battle at the Dardanelles was raging in all its fury, and it was out of the question to take a battalion, let alone a division, away from that front.... I had already obtained the sanction of the War Minister and the Minister of the Interior. After reading the proceedings of the court martial and obtaining the views of the Judge Advocate General, I confirmed the sentence of death, and it was carried out the following day at Beirut. This was the end of August, 1915. These speedy executions produced no small panic among the rebels.¹

In the aftermath of the same trial other intellectuals and activists were executed between Beirut and Damascus in the spring of 1916. Among them were Yusuf al-Hayyik, a Maronite priest, and the Maronite brothers Philippe and Farid al-Khazin, who had earlier established al-Nahda al-Lubnaniyya (The Lebanese Awakening) and founded a mainly Christian newspaper called al-Arz (Cedars).2 All were accused of conspiring against the territorial integrity of the empire and of stirring unrest in complicity with the enemy. A brief summary written by the court-martial detailed their connections to a number of associations and circles that had been established in the years before the outbreak of the conflict. The document cited several different groups, such as al-'Ahd (The Covenant), al-Qahtaniyya, al-Lamarkaziyya (Decentralization), the Beirut-based al-Jam'iyya al-Islahiyya (The Reform Society), and the Jam'iyya al-Thawra al-'Arabiyya (Association for the Arab Revolution), which all campaigned for self-government and devolution of power from the imperial center to locally elected organs and officials.³

COMPETING NOTIONS OF MODERNITY IN OTTOMAN LEBANON

Several notables and dignitaries had already been arrested or sent to internal confinement in the previous months because of their pro-French positions, including Habib al-Sa^cd, at that time deputy chair of the

Administrative Council of the governate (*mutaşarrifiyya*) of Mount Lebanon. According to the Organic Law of 1864 (which had devised a special, internationally protected autonomous status for the territory),⁴ the twelve-member assembly provided wide counsel to the governor, a Christian Ottoman subject who acted as the representative of the imperial government. On March 23, 1915, Cemal Paşa issued an order that declared the dissolution of the council (which had ceased to operate effectively in the absence of most of its members). This act was a patent violation of the Organic Law of 1864, which clearly fixed the procedures for the formation of the council and its duties.⁵ Nevertheless, in an attempt to show that the autonomy of Mount Lebanon had not been entirely stripped, Cemal Paşa proceeded ex officio to the nomination of a new council, with a stark pro-Ottoman tendency.⁶

On June 5, 1915, Ohannes Kouyoumjian resigned from his post of governor. A Constantinople-born Armenian Catholic, he had been appointed at the end of 1912 by the Sublime Porte and the European guarantor powers and had soon found himself trapped in the conflict over the local budget for the fiscal year 1913–14 that erupted between the Administrative Council and the central government, led by Mahmut Şevket Paşa. The quarrel over fiscal autonomy and levy of additional local taxation also led to the mutiny of the local Gendarmerie corps at the end of April 1913.⁷

Ohannes Paşa was convinced that Ottoman sovereignty could have been preserved if the requests of the Administrative Council about taxation control and the creation of new ports (under its own management) were satisfied by the central government, in this way confirming the benevolent nature of Ottoman rule. Curtailing the existing autonomy of the mutasarrifiyya, in his view, would only have exacerbated the situation and reinforced pro-French inclinations. His conciliatory approach proved unsustainable after the imposition of military rule, however, and under Cemal Paşa in particular. On July 11, 1915, the protocols signed in 1861 and 1864 were abrogated, and on September 25 the Ministry of Interior appointed Ali Münif Bey as governor, who was soon replaced by Ismail Hakkı Bey. This decision reversed one of the principal features of the Organic Law, which clearly stated in its first article that the governor of Mount Lebanon had to be an Ottoman Catholic subject, appointed jointly by the Sublime Porte and the European guarantor powers.

Cemal Paşa and the Ottoman military administration again sought to maintain, at least formally, a simulacrum of autonomy for Mount Lebanon, which theoretically was not annexed to the vilayet of Beirut: About this time there was a general idea throughout Syria and Beirut that the Christians of the Lebanon would rise in the near future. I was advised on all sides to suspend the special rights of the Lebanon and issue a proclamation calling upon the civil population to deliver up their arms to the Government. It was said that there were fifty thousand modern rifles in the Lebanon. I did not credit these rumours in the least, and such action on my part would have aroused suspicion among the Christian inhabitants of Syria and Palestine and provoked them to rebellion, even if they had no such intention hitherto.... For these reasons I issued a proclamation to the civil population of the Lebanon assuring them that their old privileges would be respected and no one would do them any harm. Three bishops sent by the Maronite Patriarch, Monsignor Peter Hoyek, visited me and told me that my proclamation had reassured the Maronites; they would never forget this kindness of mine, and I need never expect anything but the most loyal devotion from them in the future. The same sentiments were expressed in a letter from the Patriarch himself. 10

It was precisely over the relationship with the Maronite patriarch, however, that Cemal Paşa embarked on a symbolically significant rupture with traditional prerogatives and arrangements. Unlike the patriarchs of the Eastern-rite Catholic churches, as well as the patriarchs of all the Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox churches dwelling in the Ottoman Empire, 11 the patriarch of the Maronite church had never requested or petitioned for a *berat* of investiture issued by the sultan. Ecclesiastical affairs, and in particular the relationship between upper clergy and laity, had been shaped mostly by endogenous processes within the Maronite community. 12 This was unlike the situation in the other churches, where the overall impact of the Hatt-1 Hümâyûn of 1856 and the revolution of the Young Turks in 1908 had deeper consequences. 13 In fact the Maronites had never previously sought or been given millet status.

By pressing the Maronite patriarch to have his office ratified by an imperial rescript, Cemal Paşa intended to reassert the sovereignty of the state, while the arrest and trial of clerics was meant to show that the church was not above the law.¹⁴

Despite their iron grip and the harsh repression of all the elements deemed to be a security threat, Cemal Paşa and his aides do not seem to have departed substantially from what had probably been the prevailing Ottoman interpretation of the Organic Law of 1864 and the autonomous

status that it entailed. At no point was Ottoman sovereignty over the area of Mount Lebanon called into question. The Organic Law was at most a political expedient to avoid the Cebel-i Lübnan Meselesi (question of Mount Lebanon), giving France another pretext for a wider military expedition in the Levant and particularly in the Syrian hinterland after the campaign led by Charles-Marie Beaufort d'Hautpoul in August 1860. ¹⁵ As Engin Deniz Akarlı explains, the Ottoman conception of good governance was predicated on the preservation of public peace and order at all levels as well as on social and administrative stability. The Organic Law of 1864 in this view was a practical instrument to maintain law and order in Mount Lebanon through praxis and compromise, because any form of strife or unrest would have served the interests of France, which might have used again the area "as a stepping stone into Syria." ¹⁶

It seems legitimate even to wonder if Mount Lebanon would have appeared to be such an economically or strategically relevant territory of the empire to Ottoman bureaucrats and policymakers if its internecine conflicts had not proven immensely useful to the interests of both France and Britain in the Levant in the mid-nineteenth century. Hurşid Paşa and Fuad Paşa, the special envoys dispatched from Constantinople in the wake of the sectarian strife of 1860, had framed the events within a primitive landscape, marked by wilderness and "practices of violence" (usul-1 anife), where conflict was "a very old thing" (pek eski bir şey) that stemmed from "ancient rivalries" (münafese-i ķadîme).¹⁷ In fact such characterizations of "time-immemorial" hatreds bore little resemblance to the historical record.

To the great resentment of the Maronite bourgeoisie all the major cities along the coast were left outside the boundaries of the mutasarrifiyya, but after the administrative reform of 1888 they were integrated into the newly shaped vilayet of Beirut. Beirut itself had never been part of the mutasarrifiyya, even though it was surrounded by it on all sides, and the two areas had different fiscal, juridical, and political regimes.¹⁸

Despite political changes and differences of agendas and orientations, all the governments in Constantinople had remained persuaded that Mount Lebanon remained part of the Ottoman Empire within the limitations stipulated by the Organic Law and the internationally sanctioned protocols of 1861 and 1864, because various forms of devolution of powers and peripheral autonomy were not unusual or particularly striking in the fabric of the empire. ¹⁹

But the perception of the Maronite leadership and clergy and of a great part of this community was quite different. Even though the

Organic Law was arguably a sophisticated form of power-sharing among different sects (*Ṭawā'if*, only in part molded according to the basic framework of the millet system), there is little doubt that the new political arrangement fostered de facto a clear Maronite hegemony within the mutasarrifiyya. Demographically the Maronites constituted the largest single sect (57.5 percent of the population according to the survey of 1866-68 and 58.4 percent according to the survey of 1913-14). Altogether the Christians (including Greek Orthodox and Greek Catholics) accounted for 79.7 and 78.7 percent of the population, respectively. An additional 0.2 and 0.7 percent came under the category of "Others," which included Jews and Protestants. On the administrative level, Christians paid 67.3 percent of property taxes and 70.5 percent of total fixed taxes and held 882 civil and military positions out of 1,255 (70.3 percent) in the period 1902 to 1907. The Druzes, who had historically been the largest landowners, came second in terms of government positions, far above their demographic weight.²⁰

Politics in the era of the mutasarrifiyya of Mount Lebanon had always been informed by the constant power dialectics between the governor and the Administrative Council, which effectively transformed the scope of its authority over time from that of a merely consultative organ into some sort of local legislature by virtue of its right to veto fiscal increases and impose local taxation. Its twelve seats were allocated according to geographical and sectarian criteria. The indirect system of election (where the right to vote was reserved to village chieftains and dignitaries), although meant to promote "moderate" candidates, actually often helped candidates backed by the Maronite church or by Maronite rural leaders.²¹

In what Ussama Makdisi has called "the modernity of sectarianism," the project of "homogenizing modernization from above" fostered, albeit in different ways, first by the Tanzimat and then by the Young Turks came to be contested by an informal counterproject that began to redirect and redefine the local political landscape along confessional lines. Ahmad Beydoun describes this process as "la modernité nationaliste contre la modernisation ottomane" (nationalist modernity against Ottoman modernization). During this period the traditional authority of the landowning families connected with the tax-farming system (al-'ā'ilāt al-iqtā'iyya) and the tribal leaders (zu'amā' al-'ashā'ir) was increasingly challenged and gradually replaced by the rising power of the "leaders of the sects" (zu'amā' ṭawā'if). Forms of identity and aggregation were reforged along sectarian rather than family, regional, or clan-based lines.

Two anecdotes may help to illustrate the competing notions of modernization that were at odds in Ottoman Lebanon on the eve of World War I. The first one is the cadastral survey of 1912. Endorsed by Ohannes Paşa, the project was aimed at a sensible rationalization of property taxation, whose burden was unevenly distributed, and at fixing the discrepancies produced by the substantial transformation in the regime of land property that had taken place over previous decades. But the existing system, however dysfunctional, was beneficial to Christian monasteries and landowners, so the reform project was met with stern opposition by the Administrative Council. It is likely that the project would have been dropped if the outbreak of World War I had not rendered the whole discussion superfluous.²⁵

The other case was the change in the judicial system of the mutasarrifiyya (which had its autonomous system of courts and procedures) after the abrogation of the protocols in July 1915. In fact the Ottoman military administration tried to incorporate the existing framework within the system that was in place in the rest of the empire. Criminal and civil procedural laws were streamlined, and "properly trained judges" replaced village elders as justices of the peace. ²⁶

While it can now be argued quite convincingly that Ottoman rule tried at some point to implement forms of top-down modernization despite the resistance of local elites and power brokers, supporters of the autonomy of Mount Lebanon managed to portray themselves as defenders of a supposedly enlightened, Europeanized form of constitutionalism against the tyrannical and "backward" regime of the "Turks." One of the most vociferous exponents of this trend was the Maronite lawyer Bulus Nujaym, who published a comprehensive treatise in Paris in 1908 under the pseudonym "M. Jouplain" called *La question du Liban: Etude d'histoire diplomatique et de droit international*, which appealed mainly to the secularist and radical political and intellectual elites of France.²⁷

Equally significant was the clash between competing notions of political representation that surfaced in the autumn of 1908, when the new administration in Istanbul led by the Young Turks tried to include the mutasarrifiyya of Mount Lebanon in the next Ottoman general election. Reactions soon became polarized along sectarian lines, with the Maronite clergy leading a wide and vocal opposition to the project. While the Unionist government wanted to assert its authority and the sovereignty of the empire over the mutasarrifiyya, many local leaders persisted in their stance and refused to organize the election of representatives to the Ottoman parliament. Despite the support of the Lebanese liberals, who had some affinity with the CUP, in the end the election was not

held. The fact that Mount Lebanon would remain unrepresented in the new Ottoman parliament was deemed less important than the prospect of a reduction in the prerogatives and powers of the Administrative Council.²⁸

The attitude toward the general election revealed a certain obsession, widespread among many Maronite circles, with the idea that the Ottoman government wanted at all costs to revoke the statute of autonomy of the mutasarrifiyya and to proceed to its "annexation" (damm) to the rest of the empire. The approach of these Maronite circles toward the Organic Law and all the institutions of the mutasarrifiyya could be described as somewhat schizophrenic. On the one hand, the Organic Law was almost sacralized through the recurrent usage of expressions such as dustūr muqaddas (sacred constitution) and its intangibility was proclaimed. On the other hand, the law was also criticized as a compromise that resembled a "half-defeat." ²⁹

Although the letter of the law and its practical implementation granted a sophisticated and ample level of self-government, in the eyes of many Maronite intellectuals and politicians the Organic Law of 1864 contained two major flaws. First, it allowed non-native functionaries to be appointed as governors and therefore did not guarantee that governors would be of local origin or background. Second, the borders of the mutasarrifiyya were condemned as unfair: the territory of Mount Lebanon was often described as "deprived" of its "natural frontiers," which included the cities and ports along the coast (including Beirut and Tripoli), and the rural areas of 'Akkar, Biqa', and Jabal 'Amil. The enlargement of the mutasarrifiyya was seen both as the restoration of legitimate historical rights and as a means of giving greater economic sustainability to Mount Lebanon.³⁰

In the last years of the mutasarrifiyya these perceptions combined in the growing conviction that the interests of Mount Lebanon, and of the Maronite community in particular, could only be advanced through secession from the Ottoman Empire and the eventual formation of an "independent national government" (hukūma waṭaniyya mustaqilla) in cooperation with the benevolent "civilizing mission" (mission civilisatrice) of France, 31 often defined as umm al-ḥanūn (tender mother).

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

The book written by Jouplain/Nujaym carefully made the case for the Maronite arguments in favor of a Greater Lebanon, which, in its "natural" extended borders, was bound to blossom as an economically viable,

independent Christian state. Whereas France had decided to bow to the pressures and machinations of Britain and the Sublime Porte in 1861, it was now imperative, according to Nujaym, that France as the historical protector of the Catholics (and the Maronites in particular) in the Ottoman Empire strongly supported Maronite aspirations while at the same time protecting its economic and strategic interests in the Levant.³²

The same claims and arguments formed the basis of the memorandum presented eleven years later by the Maronite patriarch Ilyas Butrus Huwayyik at the Paris Peace Conference on October 25, 1919:

L'Indépendance du Liban, telle qu'elle a été proclamée et telle qu'elle est conçue par la presque unanimité des Libanais, n'est point simplement l'indépendance de fait qui résulte de l'effondrement de la puissance ottomane, c'est encore et surtout une indépendance complète vis-à-vis de tout état arabe qui se constituerait en Syrie. Par une conception abusive de la notion de la langue, on a voulu confondre le Liban et la Syrie ou, plutôt, fondre le Liban dans la Syrie....

En réclamant son agrandissement le Liban ne réclame, en réalité, que sa restauration territoriale dont font foi l'histoire et la carte de l'Etat-Major français de 1860–1862....

Les Libanais ne sauraient oublier les bienfaits dont, à travers les siècles, ils furent l'objet de la part de la France. La reconnaissance qu'ils en éprouvent est une de leurs traditions nationales. Ils tiennent à le proclamer solennellement à la Conférence de la Paix....

En demandant le mandat français, les Libanais sont profondément convaincus que la France libérale et généreuse saura non seulement respecter leur indépendance, mais l'affermir, la garantir, la défendre.³³

French prime minister Georges Clemenceau replied to this letter on November 10, 1919, acknowledging the requests of Patriarch Huwayyik and the Maronite delegation but clarifying that the eventual characteristics of the French mandatary administration were going to be defined only after a viable and final solution to the wider Syrian question was found:

Les limites dans lesquelles s'exercera cette indépendance ne peuvent être arrêtées avant que le Mandat sur la Syrie ait été attribué et défini. Mais la France qui a tout fait en 1860 pour assurer au Liban un territoire plus étendu, n'oublie pas que le resserrement

des limites actuelles résulte de la longue oppression dont a souffert le Liban. Désireuse de favoriser le plus possible les relations économiques entre tous les pays confiés à son mandat, elle tiendra également le plus grand compte, dans la délimitation du Liban, de la nécessité de réserver a la "Montagne" des territoires de plaine et l'accès à la mer indispensable à sa prosperité.³⁴

A similar conception of the "restitution of the lands" that had been unfairly detached from the rest of Mount Lebanon and were vital to its future economic viability was also at the core of a resolution adopted on July 10, 1920, by a narrow majority of the reconstituted Administrative Council.³⁵

The philosophical framework underlying these Maronite political agendas and aspirations was principally predicated on primordialist conceptions of communal identities, on teleological interpretations of human history, and on nineteenth-century idealist theorizations of nations as living organisms endowed with a "spirit" and a destiny.³⁶ Early historiographical works, such as that of the Jesuit father Henri Lammens, had tried to substantiate the claim that Syria formed a separate nation and "race" (possibly in a not entirely disinterested manner) that had remained quite distinct from the rest of the Arab world despite having been Arabized and partly Islamized during the Umayyad period.³⁷ Nested within Syria, "l'asile du Liban" (the refuge of Lebanon) had become a safe haven for all the religious minorities that were persecuted or marginalized elsewhere.³⁸

In July 1919 Charles Corm, a flamboyant man of letters and business, released the first issue of a new journal called *La Revue Phénicienne* (Phoenician Review), which quickly became a rallying platform for uncompromisingly pro-French intellectuals, business leaders, politicians, and opinion makers. The journal included articles on economic and political topics as well as essays with a more literary tone or content. All the pieces were the expression of an influential Westernized urban elite that was eager to dissociate itself from the Arab national movement and the Damascus-based kingdom of Faysal, son of Sharif Husayn, while at the same time expressing its devotion to France and its culture.³⁹ Corm's *La montagne inspirée* is a collection of quatrains in French, where lyrical effort is blended with political themes and a rarefied ahistorical nostalgia for the Phoenician civilization, whose genius survived unaltered, despite a series of foreign dominations, to the present day.⁴⁰

While Corm's views had limited impact, in part because he was perceived as bizarre and in part because of his later association with Zionism,

the legacy of Phoenicianism in Lebanon was bound to become very profound and has lasted until today. Whereas its extreme currents sought to posit a racial, biological, and historical continuity between the ancient Phoenicians and the modern Christian Lebanese and denied the Arab identity of Lebanon altogether, the more moderate trends envisioned Phoenician civilization as a most illustrious precursor of the generally Mediterranean orientation and dimension of contemporary Lebanon. These historical and geographical arguments prepared the ground for the articulation of a political and ideological narrative that justified the independence of the "Greater Lebanese" state (with the annexation of those territories that had remained outside the borders of the mutasarrifiyya in 1861) as an entity that was physically, geographically, historically, and culturally distinct. 42

Michel Chiha, a Chaldean Catholic banker and intellectual, was the most prominent of the authors who advocated an image of Lebanon as a bridge between East and West, a place of conjunction for the Mediterranean civilizations of the past, French culture (assumed to be the historical heir of Greco-Latin civilization), and Arab civilization, which was considered only one of the facets of Lebanon's visage. Basing himself heavily on Toynbee's theories, Chiha theorized that the "stimulus of pressure" made inevitable Lebanon's Mediterranean projection in a mercantile and business-friendly perspective that was the country's destiny. 43

In other words, the demise of Ottoman rule in Mount Lebanon and the formation of a new political framework were not at all informed by the rise of Arabism or different forms of Arab nationalist projects, as in the other Asian territories of the empire. Rather, it was predicated upon a Lebanist ideology, which assumed that "Lebanese" was synonymous with "Christian Lebanese" and more specifically with "Maronite" and therefore actually constituted a form of political Maronitism or Maronite separatism. ⁴⁴ In its more conciliatory versions (those that were willing to concede that all sects, and not just the Christians, were fully entitled to be part of Lebanon's social fabric and political life), this current stressed the primacy and the special role of the Maronite community and the relevance of the Maronite Patriarchate in particular. ⁴⁵

This composite of doctrines and theories did not come out of the blue at the end of World War I but was the result of the maturation of political cultures, practices, and historical narratives that had emerged and consolidated during the mutasarrifiyya.

It seems legitimate to ask at this point: were Ottoman decision makers fully aware of these developments in terms of political thought, identity, and aspirations? Or did they think that the tumult of Mount Lebanon and the aspirations of the Maronite elites could have been kept at bay through a careful political settlement with the reform-minded urban elites of the larger cities? The memoirs of Cemal Paşa do not offer a clear-cut answer:

I displayed great confidence in the "Reform" party....

But a few of the Maronites and Druses of the Lebanon were well known to be friendly to the French and English and under strong suspicion of secretly fomenting disorder, and as a matter of precaution I invited them to reside in Jerusalem for the duration of the expedition against Egypt....

The result of the secret inquiries I made showed that these gentlemen were not altogether without reproach, and I can see that I made no mistake in my selection when I read their names in the papers to-day and realise that they are the very men who are now doing their utmost to restore the French protectorate—thus dealing a fatal blow at Arab unity. 46

The radical nature of Maronite positions was expressed by Bulus Nujaym and by Yusuf al-Sawda in his work *Fi sabil Lubnan* (first published in Alexandria, Egypt, in 1919) and then eloquently summed up by Patriarch Huwayyik at the Paris Peace Conference. It could be fairly described as ultimately incompatible with any form or project of constitutional Ottomanism, based on the equality of all Ottoman subjects without religious, ethnic, or geographical distinctions. From this point of view Cemal Paşa's appeal to the Sunni Arab population of the coastal cities appears particularly ambiguous, because he is principally resorting to the notion of a Turkish-Arab kinship cemented by the common faith in Islam:

Above all, I want you to realise that the pro-Turkish movement which you have noticed in Constantinople and other Mussulman regions inhabited by Turks in no way conflicts with Arab ambitions. You know well that there have been Bulgarian, Greek and Armenian movements in the Ottoman Empire. There is now an Arab movement....

To-day I am in a position to assure you that the Turkish and Arab ideals do not conflict. They are brothers in their national strivings, and perhaps their efforts are complementary. The aims of the Young Turks are to awaken national feelings in the Turkish nation, train their countrymen to work, free them from the Slav yoke, give them health and national expansion, increase the welfare and prosperity of Turkish countries.... I turn to the youth of Turkey and Arabia and say these two nations will be doomed to destruction the moment they separate. Discord between these two grand pillars of the Islam religion will bring with it the downfall of the Mussulman power, and ultimately it will be impossible to avert slavery under the Slavs....

From all these Arab leaders I received answers in which they assured me of their devotion and loyalty to the Khalifate and the religious enthusiasm which inspired them in common with all the Arab countries intent on participating in the Holy War against the foes of our faith.⁴⁷

Even if such a discourse might have had its own logic in the Syrian hinterland or among the Sunni population of the coastal cities, what was its expected result or utility in Mount Lebanon, where an entirely different set of claims, aspirations, and attritions was at stake? It seems unlikely that Cemal Paşa would not be aware that these words, tinged with sectarian overtones, would not exacerbate existing tensions. Ohannes Paşa, who had been considered a loyal but too weak governor by the Unionist cabinet in Constantinople, had warned the central government that there was more trouble brewing as the empire sank first into the Balkan Wars and then into World I War on the German side. According to Akarlı, the Ottoman documents of the time show that the imperial governmental apparatus was conscious of the likelihood of a protracted mobilization of the separatist elements in the mutasarrifiyya, possibly led by part of the Administrative Council and backed by the Maronite church and the French Consulate in Beirut. These reports, however, failed to grasp "the intricacies of Lebanese politics" and in particular the complexity of patron-client relations that informed many local political attitudes. 48

At the same time, there does not seem enough evidence to corroborate the hypothesis that the Ottoman military administration tried *in extremis* to play the sectarian card, pitting the Sunnis against the Maronites. The Sunnis, after all, were far from being a cohesive, monolithic community and expressed a wide range of positions. It is true, however, that the fear of a confessional conflict loomed large among the Christians who lived outside the boundaries of the mutasarrifiyya, in particular in the

aftermath of the Balkan Wars and after non-Muslims became subject to the draft into the Ottoman army.⁴⁹

Cemal Paşa included several documents in his memoirs that ostensibly proved the pro-French treacherous machinations of some Christian circles in Beirut. One of these is a letter dated March 18, 1913, and signed, among others, by Michel Tuwayni, Petro Trad, and Ayyub Thabit, who would become influential political figures during the French Mandate. It is worth citing it here, because it clearly articulates the concerns of many Christians in Beirut:

We, the undersigned Christian members of the Executive Committee of the General Assembly, elected by all the communal councils of the province of Beirut to draw up a scheme of reforms for this vilayet, wish to lay before the French Consul–General in Syria the following observations on: (1) The position of the Ottoman Christians; (2) The reforms proposed by the Executive Committee; (3) The hopes and desires of the Syrian Christians; and beg Monsieur the Consul–General to submit their observations to the Government of the French Republic and support them with his authority....

The situation of the Christians in the Ottoman Empire has always been wretched—nay, tragic. As the result of the Balkan War and the Turkish defeats it may well become far worse, for the direct consequences of those defeats are (1) increase of taxation, (2) a revival of Mohammedan fanaticism, (3) a new impulse towards emigration on the part of the Syrian Christians....

In the hands of Turkish politicians Mohammedan fanaticism has ever been a valuable and infallible weapon. They did not hesitate to use it during recent events in the Balkans. The Balkan War was regarded by the Mohammedans as a religious war, a crusade of the Cross against the Crescent, uniting Christendom against Islam. Hence it is a simple step further for the Mohammedans to think that the presence of Christians in the Ottoman Empire has been the main cause of their defeats and decay. In Mohammedan eyes the Ottoman Christians are the true authors of all the evils which have overtaken the Empire. They are its natural enemies. They will be made the object of all kinds of insults and oppression—not, of course, such brazen and palpable oppression as might give a foreign Power an excuse for intervening (the Turk

is too cunning and cautious for that), but that secret and "slow-torture" oppression in which the Turkish authorities are such masters and have the elasticity of their laws to help them....

Since the Balkan War began a considerable number of Mohammedans have emigrated from Macedonia and Thrace into Syria. This movement is on the increase, and is openly favoured by the authorities. It means, unfortunately, that the numerical balance between the Christians and Mohammedans in Syria is upset, to the disadvantage of the Christians. The Mohammedans are already despotic enough through their religion, and they will become even more so through the oppressive weight of their numbers.⁵⁰

The authors of this plea did not dismiss the possibility of an agreement with the reformist Sunni urban middle class of Beirut, on the basis of a project of decentralization that included a provincial elected assembly for the vilayet of Beirut. Their cooperation, however, looks like an expedient before the incorporation of the coastal area within the mutasarrifiyya and its final transformation into an autonomous state under French suzerainty:

Yet in spite of all this the Christians of Beirut declared their willingness to work together with the Mohammedans in the carrying out of the reform, and for the two reasons following: (1) To checkmate the design of the Turkish Government and prevent the draft being drawn up as it desired; (2) to introduce into this draft the principle of European control in every branch of the administration....

Assuming that reforms could be obtained with the assistance of Europe, this would not satisfy the desires of the Christians in Syria. They are indissolubly allied with France, and can never forget how much admiration they owe her for her high civilisation and how much gratitude for her help in time of trouble. The heart's desire of the Christians in Syria is the occupation of Syria by France. For these reasons the undersigned members of the Executive Committee, in the name of the Christians of Beirut, and in order of rank, have put forward the following suggestions, the only suggestions they deem adequate to meet the political situation in Syria:

I. The occupation of Syria by France;

- 2. The complete independence of the vilayet of Beirut under the protection and supervision of France;
- 3. The incorporation of the vilayet of Beirut in the Lebanon, which is to be under the actual suzerainty of France.⁵¹

It would not be correct, however, to assume that ideological platforms and political projects were clear-cut and unwavering. Throughout the conflict the intellectuals of the diaspora (adab al-mahjar) in North America, including Amin al-Rayhani and Jubran Khalil Jubran, vehemently criticized Ottoman domination and lyrically expressed their shock about the upheaval brought by the war and the famine but failed to agree on a comprehensive vision of the post-Ottoman status of the region. In fact until the very end of the conflict the writers and poets in the milieu of al-Rabita al-Qalamiyya (The Literary Society) defined themselves rather interchangeably as either Syrian or Lebanese and eventually took different (albeit vague) ideological stances, from pro-Lebanese to Arab nationalist. No less complex was the scenario offered by the Arab-Syrian Congress, an umbrella organization that convened in June 1913 in Paris in order to provide a rallying platform for the various associations and societies that were campaigning for decentralization, reforms, and political rights within the Ottoman Empire. According to Asher Kaufman, the internal disagreements within the Congress clearly showed the "lack of unanimity of the political orientation of many Syro-Lebanese in the pre-war era."52 While the Phoenicianist theories propagated by Maronite separatists were starting to be formulated, Nadra Mutran wrote a book in 1916 called La Syrie de demain, in which he argued in favor of a Christian Arab identity. At that time the Arab nationalist project remained mostly equated with bilad al-Shām (historical Greater Syria), had not yet assumed a pan-Arab character, and therefore had not yet become mostly unpalatable to many Lebanese Christians. Anticipating what Henri Lammens was going to legitimize on historical grounds only five years later, Mutran endorsed the idea of an autonomous Syria under a French protectorate, of which Mount Lebanon would be part.⁵³

After his death the project of a federation of Greater Syria under French protection, rooted in a Mediterranean dimension and distinct from the tribal legacy of the Arabian peninsula, was developed by the Comité Central Syrien (CCS), founded in Paris in 1917 by Shukri Ghanim and Georges Samna. While the Alliance Libanaise, founded in Alexandria by Maronite émigrés and exiles in Egypt such as Yusuf al-Sawda and Auguste Adib (later prime minister of Lebanon), was simultaneously in

favor of an independent enlarged Lebanon under Maronite hegemony and critical of French policies, the CCS (which favored a Greater Syrian federation) vigorously campaigned for French intervention and may well have contributed to shape the positions of the Clemenceau cabinet at the Paris Peace Conference.⁵⁴

The proclamation of the short-lived Damascus-based Hashemite Arab kingdom of Faysal, son of Sharif Husayn, and the establishment of the Franco-British Occupied Enemy Territory Administration on October 22, 1918, shortly before the signature of the Armistice of Mudros on October 30, sparked major ideological, political, and tactical realignments. While France tried to secure its military control over the Syrian-Lebanese region on the basis of the Sykes-Picot accords of 1916, Faysal strived to obtain the support of notables and dignitaries in the Syrian hinterland, with the aim of consolidating a coalition government that could be an interlocutor with the Allied powers at the Paris Peace Conference, which opened on January 18, 1919. 55 In this context the option of a Greater Syrian federation became increasingly identified with the Hashemite kingdom of Faysal (itself perceived as a Bedouin and mainly Muslim project) and was quickly discharged in favor of the enlargement of the previous Ottoman mutasarrifiyya to some adjacent areas and its transformation into a full-fledged separate polity. The final defeat of Faysal's army in the Battle of Maysalun (July 23, 1920) and the signing of the Treaty of Sèvres (August 10, 1920) definitively sealed the course of political developments in Lebanon. On September 1, 1920, French high commissioner Henri Gouraud presided over the creation of a new "Grand Liban" (Greater Lebanon). The territorial claims advanced a few months before by Patriarch Huwayyik were accepted: the coastal cities of Beirut, Tripoli, Saida, and the rural regions of 'Akkar, Biqa', and Jabal 'Amil were annexed to the former mutasarrifiyya. 56

The decision was met with nearly unanimous opposition by the Sunni community, which constituted the majority of the population in the major urban centers and clearly resented annexation to a polity that was effectively hegemonized by the Maronites under French protection. The first years of the mandate were marred by repeated attempts to reverse the decision of 1920 and advocate the reunification of Muslim-majority areas to Syria. In December 1925 a Muslim delegation presented to the new high commissioner, Henry de Jouvenel, a memorandum that tried to debunk all the Maronite separatist claims:

Memorandum. Présenté au nom de la majorité des habitants des Territoires annexés illégalement au Sandjak autonome du

Mont Liban à Monsieur le Haut Commissaire de la République Française en Syrie.

Nous soussignés délégués par des milliers d'habitants, avons l'honneur de présenter à Monsieur le Haut Commissaire de la République Française, les voeux suivants, qui sont incontestablement partagés par la majorité des habitants des villes et contrées annexées au Sandjak autonome du Mont-Liban. Ces voeux peuvent se résumer dans la demande de séparation des parties annexées au Sandjak autonome du Mont-Liban et leur incorporation dans la Fédération Syrienne....

Malheureusement les habitants des contrées précitées furent complètement privés du droit de libre disposition de leur propre destinée et, bon gré mal gré, se trouvèrent du jour au lendemain annexés au Mont-Liban dont l'organisation administrative et les intérêts différaient foncièrement de ceux des parties annexées. Il est évident que ces différents ne pouvaient pas éliminés du jour au lendemain par la création d'un état qui, comme son appellation imaginaire, ne pouvait correspondre à aucun besoin ethnique ni même économique....

Jusqu'à la création du Grand Liban, de tout temps, les mêmes lois et règles administratives régissaient le vilayet de Beyrouth avec le reste de la Syrie. Il est vraiment étonnant sinon incompréhensible de voir deux parties homogènes et semblables, séparées et contre le désir de ses habitants, le vilayet de Beyrouth empêché de faire partie de la fédération syrienne, celle-ci présentant des avantages et utilités incontestablement supérieurs à n'emporte quel autre système. Quand le sandjak autonome du Mont-Liban refusa de faire partie d'une unité syrienne sous n'importe quelle forme, si bizarre qu'eût été ce refus, il fut, et à juste titre, respecté et personne n'eut l'idée de l'y contraindre. Ne serait-il pas équitable que le même procédé soit appliqué aux habitants de Beyrouth et que leurs voeux légitimes soient également respectés?⁵⁷

In the following years the Sunni political landscape became monopolized by some affluent and influential merchant families of Beirut, Tripoli, and Saida, with three different stances on the mandate. The first current, represented by Salim 'Ali Salam and 'Abd al-Hamid Karami, continued to reject any form of division of Syria into separate states and refused to accept any form of compromise with the mandatory power. The second current, exemplified by 'Umar Bayhum, maintained a Syrian Arab nationalist orientation but decided pragmatically to accept

legislative and executive posts in the new Lebanese polity. The third current, represented by Riyad al-Sulh, eventually elaborated the idea that the interests of the Sunni community could best be defended through a political settlement with the moderate Maronite wing.⁵⁸

It was the position of Riyad al-Sulh that eventually prevailed. Sunni financial and mercantile circles evaluated that it was in their interest to strike a deal that would transform the mandate into a Maronite–Sunni condominium, predicated on promoting the interests of the financial and commercial urban bourgeoisie.⁵⁹

Throughout this period teleological interpretations of history, primordialist conceptions of communal identity, opposing historical narratives, and the invention of an idealized past served as tools of political legitimization and acquisition of symbolic capital. Contrasting and largely irreconcilable interpretations of Lebanon's past clashed with contrasting and irreconcilable claims of legitimacy and political projects for the present.⁶⁰

What all the different trends and stances seemed to agree upon was a common criticism of Ottoman rule, positing World War I as a rupture and constructing a discourse of difference and distance from the Ottoman era. In his analysis of the constitutional history of Lebanon, Edmond Rabbath argues extensively in favor of continuity in the institutional framework of the country from Ottoman administration to the French mandate. The Administrative Council created by the Organic Law of 1864 was in fact reinstated during the French mandate with the same criteria regarding the allocation of seats, while the high commissioner maintained many of the prerogatives of the Ottoman mutasarrıf. More importantly, a broad set of laws, regulations, and administrative procedures was left untouched. Despite the fondness of local Francophile circles for the French Third Republic (whose constitution heavily informed the Lebanese constitution of 1926), it may be argued that most of the legal foundations of the state remained substantially those of the post-Tanzimat Ottoman system, particularly in the case of land property laws and civil law (the Mecelle, itself influenced by Napoleonic codification).⁶¹

THE INVENTION OF SOUTH LEBANON

The rural region of Jabal 'Amil, corresponding to present-day south Lebanon, at the beginning of twentieth century was an economic and social backwater that had still not recovered from the massive destruction

brought upon the area after the insurrection of Nasif al-Nassar and Zahir al-'Umar had been quelled by Ahmet Paşa in 1780. 62 Mostly inhabited by Shi^ci Muslims, the area depended administratively on the city of Saida and later became part of the vilayet of Beirut. Since the mid-nineteenth century the major landowning families in this area had experienced the gradual erosion of their traditional status, leverage, and authority. The families most closely linked to the traditional tax-farming system, such as the As^cads and the al-Saghirs, were included in fluid forms of cooptation but also challenged by the rise of a new social stratum of notables (wujahā') that had acquired a growing prominence in the wake of the Tanzimat. The 1858 Land Law, which had refined property rights to arable land and pastures and the subsequent cadastral surveys had heavily penalized the collective and community-based traditional systems of land tenancy and usufruct known as mushā', muzāra'a, and musāga. The change of the juridical regime favored the concentration of land in the hands of individuals and families with monetary, juridical, and bureaucratic assets. It was not uncommon for landlords and merchants to convert lands that had previously been in collective use into their own private property. 63

Whereas the As'ads retained their power base through the control of vast real estates, other families, such as the 'Usayrans and al-Zayns, made their entry into commerce and various urban professions and became increasingly integrated with the Sunni urban merchant families in Saida. Such connections affected the political stance of several members of these two families, initially through the support of modernizing educational projects such as those implemented since 1878 through the Islamic Association for Benevolent Intentions (Jam'iyya al-Maqasid al-Khayriyya al-Islamiyya) and then becoming increasingly influenced by the Syrian Arab project.

As C. Ernest Dawn demonstrated in the case of the Syrian hinterland, political attitudes were conditioned by social factors such as status, family rank, age, income, and education, although it would be difficult to establish a neat equation that would relate landlords to pro-Ottoman attitudes and the rising middle class to anti-Ottoman positions. The situation on the ground was actually more nuanced and fluid: pro- and anti-Ottoman discourses should therefore be understood in the case of Jabal 'Amil as the main language of political mobilization deployed by two rival privileged strata, which competed for access to and redistribution of resources and rents. In this framework instances of fidelity and contestation were linked to relations between families and clans and to

social and economic interests, shaping complex patterns of loyalty, allegiance, alliance, accommodation, compromise, opposition, and dissent.⁶⁶

The notables more involved in the traditional systems of agrarian property and patronage almost invariably maintained a low profile throughout the second half of the nineteenth century. A nearly total withdrawal from political activity was matched with a strategy of accommodation and compromise with the Ottoman bureaucracy and its local representatives. This trend was even more evident after the rise to power of Abdülhamid II (1876–1909), with the repeal of the constitution that had been granted a few months before, the enforcement of universal military conscription in the vilayet of Beirut, and the sharp upsurge in direct and indirect taxes, which sparked further waves of emigration to the Americas and western Africa.⁶⁷

Economic and juridical transitions resulted in the modification of property rights but not in significant economic development: Jabal 'Amil and the Biqa' became increasingly dependent on markets, trade networks, and investments of capital from Mount Lebanon, which saw the two peripheral regions as a safe supply of staple food, ⁶⁸ eventually paving the way for the demand of the Maronite bourgeoisie that the two regions should be annexed to the Lebanese polity.

The social conflict between ancient landlord families (linked to traditional mechanisms of authority and power relations) and the nouveaux riches (who advocated modernizing projects that would further their own economic interests) was crucial in marking the gradual demise of meaningful Ottoman rule in the mainly-Shi^ci areas of Lebanon and their absorption into the new Lebanese entity under the French mandatory administration. Many large landowning families adopted a cautious, wait-and-see stance, in an effort both to protect their social status and to retain their economic or symbolic privileges. They avoided premature exposure and did not disdain to switch their tactical and political alliances. Even after the Young Turks' revolution in 1908, many landowners in the Shi^ci majority areas did not support the Arab nationalist project and joined the "Arab revolt" of Sharif Husayn ibn 'Ali against the Ottoman Empire only at the beginning of 1918, when the outcome of World War I was fairly predictable.⁶⁹

By contrast, the new bourgeois middle class supported Arab nationalist associations, such as the Association for the Arab Revolution (Jam'iyya al-Thawra al-'Arabiyya), founded in al-Nabatiyya at the end of 1914 by members of the 'Usayran and al-Zayn families. A few months later some key exponents of the group, such as Muhammad Jabir al-Safa,

Ahmad Rida, and 'Abd al-Karim al-Khalil, were imprisoned in the wake of the repressive campaign that had been launched by the Ottoman military command against opposition circles in July 1915. It should not be seen as particularly surprising that an influential landowner such as Kamil al-As'ad was eager to support the Ottoman backlash against 'Abd al-Karim al-Khalil and his companions as late as 1915. This should be understood within the attempt to prevent the emerging Shi'i middle class from siding with the Sunni urban bourgeoisie of Beirut and in particular with the al-Sulh family, which was supporting the Syrian Arab nationalist current.⁷⁰

A few months after the debut of the Paris Peace Conference, the King–Crane Commission was charged with mapping the range of opinions among the local population. Points of view on the institutional future of the region, in particular when it came to scenarios of self-government, were mostly articulated in the traditional form of petitions and pleas. The survey became a venue for the manifestation of political and familiar interests, conflicts, and loyalties as well as an arena of competition for social hegemony within the Shi^ci community. On the one hand, the emerging middle class, circles of intellectuals, and some clerics trained in the religious networks and institutions of Najaf, including the modernizing and reformist milieu around the journal *al-Irfan* (Knowledge),⁷¹ supported the formation of an independent government of Greater Syria. Traditional notables and landowners, however, were more concerned by the possible rise of new centers of local power where their political and social role would have been marginalized.⁷²

The collapse of administrative institutions and the devastating effects of the famine caused by the embargo imposed on Mount Lebanon during the war had also led to the formation of irregular armed formations as well as to several rural uprisings, where peasants had emerged for the first time as political and social actors of primary importance. In this context the assemblies convoked in the wake of the King–Crane Commission, with the aim of preparing petitions addressed to the international delegates, provided the Shi^ci population, and in particular Shi^ci commoners, a powerful venue for a public and collective formulation of interests, aspirations, and political preferences. The gathering of Wadi al-Hujayr on April 20, 1920, in particular was a general assembly of the Shi^ci population of Jabal 'Amil. For the first time in history the different social layers designated their representatives in order to define a collective opinion and to express support for Faysal's claims. Shi^ci ulema were recognized as mediators and guarantee of the unity of the Shi^ci community.⁷³

After the defeat of Faysal's army at Maysalun, French rule was eventually consolidated, even though a few residual clusters of resistance and brigandage remained in the Biqa^c valley. In the new Lebanese entity, characterized by the evident political, cultural, ideological, and economical hegemony of the French-educated Maronite elite, the mandatory administration adopted two complementary policies. On the one hand, they tried to prevent the formation of a broad coalition among the Sunni urban bourgeois families, the Druze landowner families, and the rising Shi^ci middle class on the basis of their common dissatisfaction with the status quo. On the other hand, they prompted internal rivalries within each sect, so that no unitary leadership could emerge or consolidate. To that end the mandatory administration preserved, implemented, and even broadened those policies of juridical, administrative, and fiscal segregation along confessional lines that had been inaugurated during the Ottoman mutasarrifiyya and extended them to the territories annexed in 1920.⁷⁴

The mandatory authorities also adopted a policy of selective cooptation of notables and members of influential families (by virtue of their land properties or their monetary assets), maintaining client-patron networks based on the distribution of rents.⁷⁵

This structure of patronage networks and clientelistic policies configured a system based on "claim and request" (*maţlabiyya*). It encouraged searching for informal channels of relations with the public administration, often through personal interaction, but it evolved into a form of communication with public institutions, where petitions, articles, essays, and open letters were used to express the various protests and claims of the population. The paradox and the relevance of this form of political expression lie in its wide visibility in the public arena to a range of diverse political, social, and cultural actors. At the same time this system impeded the formation of a unitary core of opposition, mainly because of the absence of a shared political ideology or a viable program that could coalesce all the individuals and groups that were critical of the status quo. A mixture of patron-client networks, narratives of past discriminations, and claims of contemporary injustice was therefore the frame through which the Shi^ci periphery was inserted into the newborn Lebanese state. The status of the status o

During the 1930s the French mandatory administration continued its policies of selective cooptation of notables, landowners, and local elites and attempted to reward those who adopted a cooperative stance and to isolate those who supported Arab nationalist currents. The mandatory administrators thought that they could fix an increasingly complicated

political situation through provisional measures and clientelist relations. They also continued their attempt to play on sectarian differences, especially regarding high-ranking posts in the public administration, in order to preserve existing balances and incentivize dependency on the mandatory rule.⁷⁷

The French Mandate in Lebanon does not seem to represent a veritable rupture with the system inherited by the late Ottoman period. On the contrary, the sectarian system that had been experimented with in the mutasarrifiyya of Mount Lebanon through the Organic Law of 1864 and its antecedents was expanded and strengthened during the mandatory period. In fact it might be argued that such a system could serve the interests of both France and the traditional elites. Anis al-Sayigh (in Lubnan al-ta'ifi, 1955) and Joseph Mughayzil (in Lubnan wa al-qadiyya al-'arabiyya, 1959) both argue for the instrumentalist rather than primordial nature of the confessionalist system, seen as a conjunction of colonial interests and traditional structures of power. The continuity between the prewar Ottoman system and the postwar French Mandate is also explained in terms of class conflict by Mas^cud Dahir, who argues that there was a correlation between the sectarian system put in place by both authorities and the development of a form of capitalism that included parochial and local elements.⁷⁸

CONCLUSION

It seems impossible to argue conclusively whether the establishment of Greater Lebanon in 1920 was essentially the construction of an artificial entity that served the colonial interests of France in the Levant or whether it was the result of a genuine aspiration and legitimate political project of a significant portion of the local social fabric. ⁷⁹ But it seems fair to say that the process of formation of an autonomous Lebanon under French Mandate after the demise of Ottoman rule was far from being universally accepted.

Since its inception as a separate polity, Lebanon has been characterized by a deeply divided and intense historiographical debate inextricably linked with the thorny issue of its national identity. Teleological readings of history and primordial conceptions of communal identity often result in contrasting interpretations of Lebanon's past. These different and largely irreconcilable visions of the past came up with equally irreconcilable claims of legitimacy and political projects for the present. The historiographical analysis of the Ottoman era was not any different in that

regard. Several Maronite intellectuals and historians stressed the specificity and the distinct features of Mount Lebanon under Ottoman rule, even theorizing the existence of a Mountain "principality" (*imāra*) under loose Ottoman suzerainty. But Muslim and Arab nationalist intellectuals and historians tended to downplay any local specificities and strove to assert the similarity of Mount Lebanon to the rest of the Ottoman territories in the Levant.

What both ideological streams agreed upon was a generally negative view of Ottoman rule, although for different reasons. Most authors also saw the end of this era as a significant rupture in political and social balances and mechanisms. It might be appropriate, however, to question to what extent this supposed rupture was imagined or invented in the wake of the establishment of a new political order after World War I and whether the elements of continuity between the prewar Ottoman system and the postwar French Mandate did not in fact prevail over elements of discontinuity and change. The case of the Shi^ca in south Lebanon seems to provide some arguments to support the first of these theories.

More importantly, the demise of Ottoman rule in the territories that eventually formed Syria and Lebanon can be interpreted mainly as the failure of a centralizing and centripetal project of modernization, based on a notion of homogenization from above. It faced competing centrifugal political projects (often supported by foreign powers), based on ethnic nationalism, confessional separatism, and the construction of a patron-client system based upon accentuating sectarian differentiation.

NOTES

- 1. Djemal Pasha, Memories of a Turkish Statesman, 1913–1919, 205, 207, 212–13.
- 2. Meir Zamir, The Formation of Modern Lebanon, 23.
- 3. Edmond Rabbath, *La formation historique du Liban politique et constitutionnel*, 264–65.
- 4. Caesar E. Farah, *The Politics of Interventionism in Ottoman Lebanon 1830–1861*, 68–70, 86–87.
- 5. Engin Deniz Akarlı, *The Long Peace*, 82–83.
- 6. Rabbath, La formation historique du Liban, 271.
- 7. Akarlı, The Long Peace, 121-26.
- 8. Ibid., 199.
- 9. Rabbath, *La formation historique du Liban*, 228.
- 10. Djemal Pasha, Memories, 202-3.
- 11. Eugenia Kermeli, "The *Ulema* and the Patriarch."
- 12. Ussama Makdisi, *The Culture of Sectarianism*, chapter 6; Farah, *The Politics of Interventionism*, 532, 735.

- 13. Konstantinos Papasthatis and Ruth Kark, "The Effect of the Young Turks Revolution on Religious Power Politics."
- 14. Zamir, The Formation of Modern Lebanon, 36.
- 15. Farah, The Politics of Interventionism, 647-49.
- 16. Akarlı, The Long Peace, 76-77.
- 17. Makdisi, The Culture of Sectarianism, chapters 7-8.
- 18. Kamal Salibi, A House of Many Mansions, 63.
- 19. Dominique Chevallier, La société du Mont-Liban à l'époque de la révolution industrielle en Europe, 290.
- 20. Akarlı, The Long Peace, 156.
- 21. Ibid., 86-87.
- 22. Ussama Makdisi, "The Modernity of Sectarianism in Lebanon."
- 23. Ahmad Beydoun, *Identité confessionnelle et temps social chez les historiens libanais contemporains*, 367 (quotation)-80.
- 24. Sa'dun Hamada, Tarikh al-Shi'a fi Lubnan, 56-59.
- 25. Akarlı, The Long Peace, 122.
- 26. Ibid., 140.
- 27. Farès Sassine, "Le libanisme maronite," 28, 34, 77, 84-89.
- 28. Zamir, The Formation of Modern Lebanon, 18–19.
- 29. Sassine, "Le libanisme maronite," 62-64.
- 30. Ibid., 35, 87, 100-101.
- 31. Ibid., 99, 156.
- 32. Zamir, *The Formation of Modern Lebanon*, 15–16.
- 33. Ibid., 269-78:

The independence of Lebanon, in the way it was declared and conceived by nearly all Lebanese, is not only the independence de facto that stems from the demise of the Ottoman power, it is above all a complete independence from any Arab state that could be constituted in Syria. Through an ill-conceived definition of the concept of language, someone wished to merge Lebanon and Syria or, better said, to merge Lebanon within Syria....

By claiming its enlargement, Lebanon in fact only claims the restoration of its territory according to history and the map of the French General Staff of 1860–1862....

The Lebanese will not forget the benefits that they received from France through the centuries. The gratitude that they feel is one of their national traditions. They desire to solemnly proclaim this at the Peace Conference....

By demanding the French mandate, the Lebanese are deeply convinced that liberal and generous France will be able not only to respect their independence but to affirm, guarantee, and defend it.

34. Ibid., 279–80: "The limits within which this independence shall be implemented cannot be decided before the Mandate on Syria is allocated and defined. However, France, which did everything in 1860 to ensure an enlarged territory to Lebanon, does not forget that the delimitation of current borders is a result of the long oppression suffered by Lebanon. Wishing to favor as much as possible the economic relations among the areas under its mandate, it [France] shall take into equally

great consideration, when delineating Lebanon, the necessity of reserving to the 'Mountain' some territories in the plains and the access to the seashore that is necessary to its prosperity."

- "Le Memorandum des Sept," Correspondance d'Orient, October 30, 1920, 260–61.
 See Zamir, The Formation of Modern Lebanon, 285–86.
- 36. Sassine, "Le libanisme maronite," 206-7, 318-19. For a theoretical background on nationalism and comparable processes of identity-building, although in a different context, see also Aydın Babuna, "The Berlin Treaty, Bosnian Muslims, and Nationalism."
- 37. Henri Lammens, *La Syrie*, 8–12, 108–28.
- 38. Salibi, A House of Many Mansions, 130-50.
- 39. Asher Kaufman, Reviving Phoenicia, 89-93.
- 40. Charles Corm, La montagne inspirée, 9-13, 49-55, 91.
- 41. Kaufman, Reviving Phoenicia, 158–59.
- 42. Kais M. Firro, *Inventing Lebanon*, 34–35.
- 43. Michel Chiha, Visage et présence du Liban, 34-35, 160-61, 146-47, 154-55.
- 44. Beydoun, *Identité confessionnelle et temps social*, 194–96, 274–83.
- 45. Sassine, "Le libanisme maronite," 250–53.
- 46. Djemal Pasha, Memories, 202-3.
- 47. Ibid., 200-202.
- 48. Akarlı, The Long Peace, 129, 244 (quotation).
- 49. Zamir, The Formation of Modern Lebanon, 24.
- 50. Djemal Pasha, Memories, 229-30.
- 51. Ibid., 230-31.
- 52. Kaufman, Reviving Phoenicia, 80.
- 53. Firro, Inventing Lebanon, 19.
- 54. Kaufman, *Reviving Phoenicia*, 83–84.
- 55. Rabbath, *La formation historique du Liban*, 289–92.
- 56. Kamal Salibi, *The Modern History of Lebanon*, 118–19.
- 57. Zamir, The Formation of Modern Lebanon, 287-92:

Memorandum. Submitted in the name of the majority of the inhabitants in the territories illegally annexed to the autonomous sanjak of Mount Lebanon to the High Commissioner of the French Republic in Syria.

We, hereby delegated by thousands of inhabitants, are honored to submit to the High Commissioner of the French Republic the following wishes, which are undoubtedly shared by the majority of the inhabitants of the cities and rural areas annexed to the autonomous sanjak of Mount Lebanon. These wishes can be summed up in the demand of secession of the lands annexed to the autonomous sanjak of Mount Lebanon and their incorporation in the Syrian Federation....

Unfortunately, the inhabitants of the above-mentioned areas were completely deprived of the right of freely deciding their own destiny and, whether they liked it or not, from one day to another found themselves annexed to Mount Lebanon, whose administrative organization and interests were completely different from those of the annexed areas. It is clear that

such differences could not be fixed in a day through the creation of a state that, just like its imaginary name, could not correspond to any ethnic or economic request....

Until the creation of Greater Lebanon, at any time the same laws and administrative regulations applied to the vilayet of Beirut as well as the rest of Syria. It is really shocking, if not utterly incomprehensible, to see two homogeneous and similar parts being separated and, against the wish of its population, the vilayet of Beirut being prevented from joining the Syrian federation, which has advantages and benefits undoubtedly higher than any other regime.

When the autonomous sanjak of Mount Lebanon refused to join a Syrian entity of whatever form, however bizarre this refusal was, this decision was rightly respected, and nobody ever thought to dismiss it. Would it not be fair that the same criterion be applied to the inhabitants of Beirut and that their legitimate wishes were equally respected?

- 58. Firro, Inventing Lebanon, 134-35.
- 59. Michael Johnson, *Class and Client in Beirut*, 25–26.
- 60. Salibi, A House of Many Mansions, 200–215.
- 61. Rabbath, *La formation historique du Liban*; Akarlı, *The Long Peace*, 133–38. The narrative of a national, supposedly nonsectarian uprising against the Ottoman rule was alive in the 1960s, when the Rahbani brothers produced Safar Barlik, a musical movie with Fairouz (a very popular Lebanese singer) as protagonist. Set in a fictional, nondescript mountain village, Safar Barlik is the romanticized story of the villagers' resistance against the cruel Ottoman domination. This line of narration perpetuated and strengthened the idea of a Lebanese national, collective, and nonsectarian awakening and uprising against Ottoman rule. This image, however, was far from true.
- 62. Hamada, Tarikh al-Shi'a fi Lubnan, 454-63, 493-505.
- 63. Firro, Inventing Lebanon, 90, 227.
- 64. Ibid., 89.
- 65. Salibi, The Modern History of Lebanon, 138-40.
- 66. C. Ernest Dawn, From Ottomanism to Arabism, 157-60, 163-64, 173.
- 67. Ali Kazem El-Amin, "The Shi^cites of Lebanon," 132-38.
- 68. Tamara Chalabi, The Shi'is of Jabal 'Amil and the New Lebanon, 23–28, 98–100.
- 69. El-Amin, "The Shi^cites of Lebanon," 142–47.
- 70. Chalabi, *The Shi* is of Jabal Amil, 48–52.
- 71. Chibli Mallat, Shi Thought from the South of Lebanon, 9–15.
- 72. Rodger Shanahan, The Shi a of Lebanon, 47-53.
- 73. Chalabi, *The Shi* is of Jabal Amil, 68, 77–84.
- 74. Firro, Inventing Lebanon, 84-85, 166-68.
- 75. Shanahan, *The Shi^ca of Lebanon*, 44–45.
- 76. Chalabi, *The Shi* is of *Jabal Amil*, 112–13, 115–28.
- 77. Firro, Inventing Lebanon, 159.
- 78. Ibid., 49-52, 56-61.
- 79. Zamir, *The Formation of Modern Lebanon*, 216–18.

Iran and World War I

Eric Hooglund

Iran became a victim of World War I, a conflict that almost led to the disintegration of the country in civil war and the near loss of sovereignty to Britain. Iran's unwilling involvement was due to the British and Russians. In World War I Britain and Russia were allied against Germany and the Ottoman Empire. Since 1911 Russian forces had been occupying all the main towns of northwestern Iran (Azerbaijan Province), which bordered Ottoman Turkey on the west and the Russian Empire on the north. The British were occupying southeastern Iran but also very interested in the southwestern province of Khuzestan, which bordered the Ottoman Empire on the west and the British-dominated Persian Gulf coast of the Arabian Peninsula on the south. Oil had been discovered there in 1908, and a British company had sold a majority share of its refining and production facilities to the British government in early 1914. Even though the Iranian parliament had declared the country's official neutrality after the war commenced, this did not deter the occupying powers from using Iranian territory to launch attacks against the Ottomans, who responded by attacking the positions of Russian military forces in Iran. By 1915 Iranian Azerbaijan had became a battleground for Russian and Ottoman forces, while in different parts of the country Iranian guerrilla groups organized against the British and Russian troops, often with support from the gendarmerie, whose Swedish officers were sympathetic to the Germans. In the Caspian province of Gilan, the Jangalis under Mirza Kuchek Khan emerged as a major force that challenged the authority of the central government. After the war Britain proposed a treaty, which would have transformed Iran into a British protectorate. The government's perceived willingness to acquiesce to the treaty provoked uprisings and autonomy movements throughout the country during 1919, and the Jangali movement even declared a Soviet Socialist Republic in Gilan.

INTRODUCTORY OVERVIEW

In studying the overall impact of World War I on Iran, we find no overall assessment in terms of what that war meant for the development of the Iranian nationalist imaginary and its relationship to the country's political developments in both the immediate prewar and postwar years. Case studies about the war years in Iran, especially accounts written by British diplomats and military personnel who served in Iran in the period, inevitably adopt the perspective of British interests and shed scant insight on what Iranians thought about world events that impacted their country in multiple negative ways but over which they had little or no control. To construct such an assessment, especially after the passage of nearly a century, is a daunting task. It needs to start with a historical narrative that weaves together many threads. Thus my main objective in this chapter is to begin this process.

ROLE OF MAJOR EUROPEAN POWERS IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY IRAN

When World War I commenced at the end of August 1914, Iran already was a country whose independence was seriously compromised by the main imperialist powers. The British Empire and Russian Empire both had been intervening in its economic and political policies for decades. Indeed parts of Iranian territory actually were occupied by British and Russian troops in 1914. This was not a positive omen, given that Iran's entire western border was shared with the Ottoman Empire, a country allied with Germany and against which both Britain and Russia would declare war by November. Furthermore both Britain and Russia had plans for an envisioned partition of the Ottoman lands and only seven years earlier had agreed to divide Iran among themselves into spheres of influence. This 1907 Anglo-Russian accord stipulated that all of northern Iran (including the capital, Tehran, and extending as far south as Isfahan and Yazd) would be an exclusive zone for Russian commercial and other interests. All of southeastern Iran (which was adjacent to British India and Afghanistan, a country that Russia agreed to recognize as a British protectorate) would be an exclusive zone for British interests. Central and southwestern Iran would be a neutral area where both countries could pursue their interests.1

The main objective of the 1907 Anglo-Russian Agreement was to resolve the long rivalry between Britain and Russia over their competing

interests in Central Asia. This contest had become known popularly as the Great Game, and Iran had been a primary focus since early in the nineteenth century.² During this period Iran was ruled by the Qajar dynasty (1794–1925). The Qajars had inherited from their predecessors an empire that was a weaker power internationally than the Europeans, especially Britain and Russia, which had emerged as world powers during the eighteenth century when Iran was riven by decades of civil war. Britain was extending its empire in India on Iran's eastern border, while Russia was advancing south toward the Caspian Sea. Both empires continued their expansion during the nineteenth century, and Iran inevitably got caught up in their Great Game. Fath Ali Shah (r. 1797–1834), who established the Qajar royal court in Tehran, was the first ruler to recognize Iran's relative military weakness vis-à-vis the Europeans, a lesson that he learned from two disastrous wars against Russia.³

The first war with Russia began in 1805, when Fath Ali Shah decided to join with France's Napoleon against Russia, which was interfering in Georgia (Gurjistan) and encouraging its ruler to declare independence. The Iranian army, equipped with mid-eighteenth-century weapons, proved ineffective against the technologically advanced arms of its Russian counterpart and consequently lost many battles. In 1813 Fath Ali Shah reluctantly agreed to the Treaty of Gulistan, under which Iran ceded to Russia all of Georgia, territories in the eastern Caucasus Mountains, and the ancient Caspian Sea ports of Baku and Derbent (Darband in Persian). Iran never became reconciled to the territorial losses in the Treaty of Gulistan. For several years thereafter, frictions continued with Russia over the demarcation of the new frontier. These unresolved tensions led to a second war, during which Russian forces occupied Tabriz in 1826. This war also progressed badly for Iran, concluding with the Treaty of Turkomanchai in 1828. Under its terms Iran was forced to cede more territory to Russia: Armenia, Nakhichevan, and other Iranian possessions in the southeastern Caucasus. This treaty effectively established the Irano-Russian border along the Aras River, the geographic border between the Caucasus and Zagros mountain chains, and the mental border between Asia and Europe. Iran also had to pay an indemnity to Russia and to accept a number of Russian extraterritorial privileges, such as allowing Russian subjects charged with crimes in Iran to be tried by Russian consular courts.5

The humiliating defeats in the wars with Russia prompted Fath Ali Shah and especially his son, Abbas Mirza (1789–1833), to seek the secret of European military success. This led to a "reform" project that would

preoccupy the Qajars intermittently until the dynasty was deposed by an act of the Iranian parliament in 1925. The initial reforms were directed at the military, with the aim of creating a strong, disciplined force trained in European tactics and equipped with European technology. Inevitably the need for a structured education in science and European languages arose, and by 1851 the government had established such a high school in Tehran. The Qajar shahs, however, were ambivalent about reforms. On the one hand, a ruler such as Nasir ed-Din Shah (r. 1848–96) appreciated the benefits of having a strong state that could stand up to foreign threats, quell domestic rebellions, and collect taxes regularly. On the other hand, he feared the destabilizing effects of educating and exposing new generations to European ideologies that challenged the concept of absolute monarchial rule.⁶

This ambivalence ultimately hindered the creation of an efficient military force that could resist foreign aggression, as Nasir ed-Din Shah learned during the first decade of his long rule. By the 1840s Britain was diplomatically and militarily active in areas of historic Iranian influence and hegemony, primarily Afghanistan and the Persian Gulf region. In 1856, after Iran occupied Herat in an effort to reassert its sovereignty over western Afghanistan, Britain declared war. Within a few months its forces had occupied Iran's main ports on the Persian Gulf coast. The rapid British advance compelled the Iranian government to seek peace. Under the terms of the 1857 Treaty of Paris, Iran renounced all claims to Afghanistan, agreed to recognize Britain as the country responsible for Afghanistan's foreign relations, and extended commercial privileges to British subjects.⁷

Nasir ed-Din Shah and his ministers also failed to keep foreign political ideas out of Iran. The technological innovations of the nineteenth century (mass-produced textiles, trains, iron ships, telegraphs, and gaslights) and Iran's geographic location between two powerful empires combined to increase European interest in the country as a potential market for exports, as a source for raw materials such as cotton for Russian textile mills, and as a strategic buffer. By the late nineteenth century the presence of British and Russian diplomats, merchants, missionaries, and assorted adventurers in Iran's major cities had engendered various reactions. Some Iranian merchants who hoped to profit from foreign commercial contacts traveled to Europe and returned feeling angry about the "backwardness" of their own country compared with what they had observed abroad. At home they invested in private schools where their sons (and more rarely daughters) were educated in European languages

and subjects deemed appropriate for modern times. Some prosperous merchants even began to send adolescent boys to Istanbul or farther west for advanced training. Meanwhile the rising volume of imported factory goods was beginning to harm many small merchants economically as well as most artisans. They increasingly blamed the government for not protecting their interests from foreign competition. In particular they resented the taxes that Nasir ed-Din Shah imposed to finance his pleasure trips to Europe and the numerous monopolistic concessions that he granted to British and Russian subjects between 1872 and 1890 to exploit Iran's resources, develop infrastructure projects, or control the trade of specific products. In this atmosphere many urban Iranians began to embrace European ideas about the need for political reform and the efficacy of rebellion against unjust rule.⁸

An informal political alliance that would play a pivotal role in Iran's major political events from 1891 until the Islamic Revolution of 1978-79 also emerged in the late nineteenth century between the merchant and artisan class (the bazaar) and the Shi'i clergy. The ulema's conception of their role had been changing during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, from the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century ideal of being spiritual advisors to the shah to a notion of being defenders of the rights of the people against the perceived injustices of government. During the last two decades of Nasir ed-Din Shah's rule, it was the bazaar (many of whose merchants contributed a percentage of their annual profits to favored clerics) that keenly resented the arbitrary and onerous taxes, imposed to repay foreign loans used to finance the shah's extravagant tours of Europe. Thus as European notions of good and bad government began to circulate in Iran during the late nineteenth century the clergy played an important role by providing Islamic justifications for such ideas as rebelling against an unjust ruler and controlling the ruler's behavior through laws.9

IRAN'S CONSTITUTIONAL REVOLUTION

The Qajar monarchs failed to keep revolutionary ideas out of Iran. In the first five years of the twentieth century secret societies were organized in Tehran (the capital) and Tabriz (the second most important political and economic center) as well as in other main cities such as Isfahan, Mashhad, and Rasht. These secret societies discussed and debated ideas that they read in illegal Persian newspapers, which were smuggled into the country and circulated clandestinely. The secret societies not only discussed the problems of governance: some of them began to print and

distribute leaflets that denounced the shah and various officials, while others planned for a revolution. The discontent culminated in the Constitutional Revolution, which began with a series of popular protests in 1905. By December most of the clergy of Tehran and many merchants had taken sanctuary in a shrine near the capital, effectively initiating a spiritual and economic strike. Demonstrations spread to other cities during 1906. Government efforts to compel shops to remain open led an estimated 14,000 Tehran merchants to seek sanctuary on the expansive grounds of the British Embassy's summer retreat in the mountains north of Tehran. The spreading chaos finally induced Mozaffar ed-Din Shah to assent to demands for an elected assembly (*majlis*) in August 1906. This elected body's first order of business was to draw up a constitution that the shah accepted just days before he passed away in early January 1907.

It is ironic that Great Britain and Russia, the two powers most involved in Iran, also were the main sources of the political ideas that provided the ideological ferment for Iran's Constitutional Revolution, a major upheaval that both empires perceived as a threat to their political interests. The Iranian intellectual imaginary of an ideal constitutional monarchy was Britain (which actually had no written constitution), not authoritarian tsarist Russia. Educated Iranians initially learned about the merits of constitutional government from Akhtar (Star), an early and influential Persian newspaper published in Istanbul between 1875 and 1896, which discussed the merits of constitutional government at a time when several European monarchies were accepting political reforms that vested governmental decision-making authority in elected parliaments. Even the Ottoman Empire was affected by these changes. Akhtar also chronicled the intellectual debates in Istanbul after Sultan Abdülhamid II suspended the 1876 constitution. An even more influential Persian newspaper, especially for the secret societies that prepared for the Constitutional Revolution, was the London-based Qanun (Law), which Mirza Malkum Khan published between 1890 and 1906. This paper extolled the advantages of a society governed by fair and transparent laws that everyone obeyed, especially rulers like the queen (of England) and ministers.¹³

Even in tsarist Russia actions of resistance against authoritarian rule were rife by the 1890s, especially in the oilfields of Baku, which had developed into the world's largest oil production center. Among its thousands of migrant workers were many men from the nearby Iranian provinces of Azerbaijan and Gilan. They periodically returned home to visit their families in Iran, bringing with them the revolutionary ideas that became the core principles of the Russian Social Democratic Party (RSDP), which was formed in 1898. Among the Russian Azeris whose influence extended

to the Iranian workers was the RSDP activist Mammad Amin Rasulzade, founder of the Hummet Party in Baku (ca. 1902), the predominantly Muslim branch of the RSDP. He contributed articles to *Irshad* (Guidance), a Baku-based Persian-language newspaper that was widely read in Iran, especially in Tabriz. Rasulzade opposed the institution of monarchy, despotic government, and capitalism and advocated constitutional government based on equitable laws and social justice.¹⁴

The Russian police deemed Rasulzade's views to be subversive and in 1909 expelled him from Russia. He went to Tehran, where he edited *Iran-e Now* (New Iran) and helped to found Iran's Social Democratic Party along with fellow Russian Azeri Meshadi Azimbey Azizbelov and Iranian Azeri Haydar Khan.¹⁵

Prior to 1907 Iran had succeeded to a limited extent in exploiting the rivalry between Britain and Russia to its own benefit. Neither of these two empires, however, welcomed the transformation of Iran (at least on paper) into a constitutional monarchy in which an elected assembly had the power to approve of foreign policy issues such as economic agreements, loans, trade, and treaties. Furthermore the Constitutional Revolution had demonstrated the growing strength of a nascent Iranian nationalism heavily tinged with resentment of foreign interference in the country's affairs. More troubling from a British and Russian perspective was the emergence of Iran's first indigenous (and relatively free) press in 1906. Newspapers exposed, sensationalized, and sometimes excoriated the political contacts between resident foreign diplomats and government officials not just in Tehran but also in Tabriz, the seat of the crown prince and his court, and other large cities in which one or more foreign consulates were located. 16 All these factors, along with their mutual concerns about the rising power of Germany in Europe, prompted Britain and Russia to compromise on their differences over Asia in the aforementioned 1907 agreement.

When news of the Anglo-Russian Treaty reached Iran, it provoked anger and consternation among those attentive to national and international politics. Because such Iranians regarded Russia's tsar as even more autocratic than the shah—who now was restrained by a constitution—they generally viewed the participation of the historic northern foe in a pact directed at Iran's independence as another example of typically reprehensible Russian behavior. Britain, however, was different. Those committed to making constitutional government a success in Iran often cited the British system as an appropriate model to emulate. In fact constitutionalists tended to credit Britain with at least indirect assistance to their

cause when the British Embassy had allowed them to use its summer residence as a sanctuary during 1906. For these reasons Britain's participation in the treaty was incomprehensible, even seen as a betrayal of democratic ideals. Thus Britain bore the brunt of popular condemnation and opprobrium for the treaty in the press. Henceforth Britain became the bête noire of foreign enemies. For the following fifty years (1907 to 1953) both proponents and opponents of constitutional government would blame British perfidy for Iran's internal and external political problems.

Among Iranians opposed to the new constitution was Mohammad Ali Shah, the son and successor to Mozaffar ed-Din Shah. Initially his aim seems to have been to undermine the restraints on his authority by exploiting political divisions among the deputies elected to the new assembly. By the end of 1906 three distinct ideological factions had emerged among the Majlis deputies: royalists generally upheld the privileges of the court; moderates wanted to institutionalize legal limits on the exercise of arbitrary government by officials; and liberals advocated various social reforms, including secular laws that would affect the status of the clergy adversely (at least from the perspective of antiliberal clerics). For eighteen months, however, the shah and his royalist allies failed in their political efforts to reverse the constitutional process. Mohammad Ali Shah eventually believed that he had Russian support for an assault on the Majlis. In June 1908 he used the Russian-officered Cossack Brigade, a small military force of about 1,000 men formed in 1879, to carry out a coup: the Majlis was bombarded and dissolved, more than thirty liberal deputies were arrested, newspapers were closed, and several prominent constitutionalists were captured and killed. The coup initiated a civil war between royalists and constitutionalists that lasted for thirteen months. The conflict ended in July 1909 when proconstitution volunteer armies from Tabriz in the north and Isfahan in the south met outside Tehran and were admitted into the city by sympathetic citizens. The royalists fled, with the shah seeking sanctuary in the Russian Embassy.¹⁷

Neither Britain nor Russia welcomed the constitutionalists' victory, their deposing of Mohammad Ali Shah in favor of his minor son, Ahmad Shah (r. 1909–25), or the new Majlis's efforts to restrict foreign influence. The early twentieth century was the heyday of European imperialism. In accordance with the prevailing mind-set of the period, both the British Empire and the Russian Empire were unwilling to tolerate interference by the indigenous people of Iran (or of any other place in Asia) in what they regarded as their "legitimate" imperial interests. They perceived the plans of the Majlis to rationalize fiscal policy, especially the collection

of tax revenues, as direct threats to these interests. Accordingly, after an abortive attempt by the deposed shah to reclaim the throne in the summer of 1911, with tacit Russian support, British troops began to occupy southern cities, including Bushehr and Shiraz. Russian forces occupied the Caspian ports of Enzeli and Rasht. At the end of November Russia, threatening to expand its occupation to Tehran, presented the Iranian government with an ultimatum: fire Morgan Shuster, the American advisor and de facto treasurer whose fiscal reforms had infuriated the tsar's envoys. The defiant Majlis refused to comply, even though the government was prepared to do so; in mid-December, with Russian troops at Qazvin (only about eighty miles northwest of the capital), the prime minister, Samsam al-Saltaneh, dismissed the Majlis and accepted the Russian demands.¹⁸

Historians generally consider the December 1911 capitulation to the Russian ultimatum as the end of the constitutional reform period that had began in 1905. Indeed a new Majlis was not elected and convened until late 1914. In the meantime the Iranian government essentially cooperated with the British and Russians. The main decision maker was the regent for the minor Ahmad Shah. The regent believed in a strong monarchy, distrusted the Constitutionalists (who were silenced without the parliament or a free press), and was reputed to be an Anglophile. Consequently the British and Russians expanded the occupation of towns in their respective spheres of influence with no effective resistance from the central government. By early 1914 Russia had 17,500 troops in northern Iran. In most places individual Iranians protested the foreign occupation, which often was brutal, especially in the province of Gilan. But the disciplined troops suppressed the demonstrations, often with heavy casualties among the protesters. In one particularly notorious incident in March 1912 Russian forces in the northeastern city of Mashhad bombarded the sacred Shi^ci shrine of Imam Reza, the eighth of the twelve descendants of the Prophet Mohammad, all of whom Iranian Shi^ci Muslims revere as his infallible spiritual successors. More than fifty people from a large group of protesters who had taken sanctuary in the shrine were killed or wounded.19

WORLD WAR COMES TO IRAN

The Iranian government had no interest in becoming involved in a war between European powers. Both Britain and Russia however, tried to pressure Iran into declaring war against Germany. The government in Iran was in transition. Ahmad Shah reached his majority during the summer of 1914 and dismissed the regent and prime minister, the Anglophile Abu'l-Qasem Khan Nasir al-Molk. The new prime minister called for parliamentary elections. On November 1, a few days after the Ottoman Empire entered the war as an ally of Germany, he issued a declaration proclaiming Iran's neutrality. One month later, after three years without a parliament, the Third Majlis convened in Tehran. The Russians, whose occupation troops had expanded to Qazvin, were not happy with the pro-German sentiment expressed in the rhetoric of new Majlis deputies, some of whom openly called for siding with Germany. The British were equally displeased. This mutual concern prompted Moscow and London to sign a secret agreement in 1915 whereby Britain agreed to cede all of northern Iran to Russian control in return for Russian recognition of British interests in the area of Iran that had been designated as a neutral zone in their 1907 agreement.²⁰

This secret agreement was a boon for Britain, which had developed a special interest in the southwestern part of the neutral zone between its own area and Russian interests. In 1908 a British subject who held an exclusive concession to prospect for petroleum in all of Iran except for the provinces adjacent to the Russian border discovered commercial quantities of oil in Khuzestan province. By 1909 the Anglo-Persian Oil Company (APOC) had been established and had begun building infrastructure for producing and exporting the oil. The APOC completed a large oil refinery complex on the island of Abadan in 1912, and within one year Iran emerged as a major oil exporter. The development of Iran's oil industry caught the attention of Winston Churchill, who then was first lord of the admiralty (minister in charge of the British navy). In late 1913 and early 1914 he negotiated for the government to buy a controlling interest in APOC. Significantly he also ordered that British naval vessels shift from coal to oil. Thus by early 1915 both Britain and Russia perceived Iran as a place of vital interest, a perception that political leaders in Germany not only understood very well but also were interested in challenging. Obviously, neither the British nor Russians were prepared to allow Iran to be pro-German.

Consequently Russia moved some troops from Qazvin to Karaj (only about thirty miles from Tehran) and threatened to occupy the capital. This prompted the Majlis deputies to leave Tehran for Qom, accompanied by diplomats who expected the entire government to evacuate the capital. In the end the government did not leave Tehran. The Majlis in Qom organized a National Defense Committee, but a minority

(including all members of the Democratic Party) formed a breakaway faction that moved on to Kashan and eventually to the western city of Kermanshah, where it set up the Iranian Provisional Government. This actually was recognized by Germany and the Ottoman Empire as the legitimate government of Iran, but it collapsed when British forces successfully occupied Kermanshah in 1916.²¹

Once the Ottoman Empire had entered the war in late October 1914 as an ally of Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Iran was completely surrounded by belligerent powers, none of which seemed concerned about its neutral status. Indeed the German Intelligence Bureau for the East met in Istanbul in late 1914 to plan how to capture Russia's oilfields on the Caspian Sea and the British ones in Iran. The entire western Iranian border with the Ottoman Empire was viewed as an appropriate theater of war in terms of striking at Russian and British interests. Accordingly, strategies were drawn up for Turkish army units to attack Russian forces in Iranian Azerbaijan and for German agents to organize Iranian tribal groups in southern Iran against British positions. Turkish units actually entered Iran at the end of December, with the help of Iranian Kurds, and captured the small city of Urumiyeh in early January 1915. They even entered the important city of Tabriz one week later but soon were driven out by the Russians.²² The Turkish advances, although directed against the Russians, caused consternation in Tehran, where the government had no forces with which to defend the capital, let alone anyplace else in the country. The small Cossack Brigade, with its Russian officers, was not seen as a reliable force for defending Iran; nor was the Gendarmerie, whose Swedish officers openly sympathized with the Germans.

Further south, Wilhelm Wassmuss (1880–1931), the vice consul at the German Consulate in Bushehr, returned from the Istanbul meeting in early 1915 to organize Arab, Bakhtiari, Lur, and Qashqai tribes against the British. He initially had some success. By the end of the year all British and Russian residents had fled or been expelled from southern Iran. The activities of Wassmuss prompted Britain to dispatch Percy Sykes to Iran in March 1916 to organize a special armed force, recruited locally and from India, to protect population centers from tribal attacks. This British-officered militia eventually became known as the South Persia Rifles, which would operate until the Iranian government ordered its disbandment in 1921. Recruiting Iranians initially was difficult due to the hostility of powerful tribal leaders, such as the Qashqai khans. Perhaps of equal importance was the perception in Iran during 1916 that the British

were not doing well in the war, especially after the Ottoman military in April besieged and defeated a British invading army at Kut al-'Amar, about a hundred miles south of Baghdad. The process of transforming the South Persia Rifles into a credible and effective militia began to make progress after the British captured Baghdad in March 1917.²³ Nevertheless, Wassmuss actually eluded capture until the end of the war in 1918, even though the British had offered a hefty £500,000 reward for his arrest. His exploits would earn him a popular title in Britain as Lawrence of the Persians, after the equally legendary Lawrence of Arabia.²⁴

In other parts of the country Iranian guerrilla groups organized against the British and Russian troops. They were generally ineffective, except in the Caspian province of Gilan, where the Jangalis under the leadership of Mirza Kuchek Khan had emerged as a major force by 1915. The Jangalis opposed the Russian occupation of Gilan specifically and the presence of the British and Russians in Iran more generally. This shared opposition to foreign control had brought together a heterogeneous assemblage of people with different ideas on how to reform Iran's perceived political and social problems, including those influenced by the radical ideas of Russian social democrats. The Jangalis carried out attacks against Russians and local agents from bases in the Caspian forests (jangal in Persian) but did not move against the provincial capital of Rasht. Nevertheless, their successes caused consternation among the Russians and the local government. The Russians had withdrawn many troops from Gilan to help defend the battle lines against the Ottomans and Germans, but in 1916 Russia reinforced its garrisons in northern Iran and initiated offensives against the Jangalis, actually inflicting a major defeat on them at the end of 1916.²⁵

The February 1917 Revolution in Russia made it infeasible to follow up against the Jangalis. The October Revolution eight months later actually led to the repudiation of Russia's century-long military intervention in Iran. The radical social democrats (Bolsheviks) under Vladimir Lenin not only were determined to take Russia out of the war but also were intent on publishing and denouncing the various secret treaties of the imperial era, including the 1915 agreement among the Allied Powers on how to divide up the Ottoman Empire. Far from being embarrassed by the exposure of its covert plans for the postwar Middle East (and also those of its ally France), Britain moved in early 1918 to extend its influence over what the now abrogated 1907 treaty had defined as the Russian zone in northern Iran. This would bring Britain into direct conflict with the Jangalis as well as with the Russian Bolsheviks (see below).

POSTWAR IRAN

To secure its interests Britain negotiated a draft treaty in August 1919 that would have made Iran a de facto protectorate. Although the Iranian government saw the agreement as a means to pay for necessary development projects and as recognition of Britain's new power as a war victor, the publication of its terms provoked a patriotic outcry in Iran and prevented the government from convening a new Majlis to ratify it. Lack of formal ratification, however, did not stop the British from acting in Iran as though the treaty had come into force. Russia in its new form as the Soviet Union denounced the agreement as a ploy to destroy Iran's independence.²⁶

Sheikh Mohammad Khiyabani (b. 1880 in Khameneh, near Tabriz), a former leader in the constitutional revolution period and former deputy to the Majlis, organized a convention in Tabriz of local Democratic party members to protest the treaty. The convention sent demands to Tehran for administrative and social reforms and for the convening of provincial assemblies; it also voted to rename the Tabriz area Azadistan (land of freedom). The actions of the Azerbaijani Democrats and their leader, Khiyabani, amounted to a de facto rebellion against the central government that lasted for several months. By August 1920, however, local Kurdish and Turkish tribes had become hostile to the Democrats, while the Tabriz contingent of the Cossacks switched from being neutral to pro–central government. The Cossacks attacked the Democrats, and Khiyabani was killed.²⁷

Meanwhile the Jangali movement had regrouped in Gilan and remerged as a major force by the end of 1917. The British sent a military force to occupy the Caspian port of Enzeli, north of Gilan's capital, Rasht. This contingent's main aim was to send arms to anti-Bolshevik groups (White Russians) in the Caucasus, but it also collaborated with local landowners who opposed the Jangalis. The British intervention prompted Moscow to dispatch a Red Army unit to Enzeli in May 1920, which drove out the British. Several Iranians (of Azerbaijani and Armenian origins) who had been living in Baku and other areas of the former Russian Empire and supported the Bolsheviks came to Enzeli to join the Jangalis. In June 1920 they and local Iranians who shared their views convened a congress at which they formed the Communist Party of Iran, with Ahmad Sultanzadeh (born Avetis Mikaelian in Iranian Azerbaijan) as its first secretary-general (replaced three months later by Haydar Khan). The Communist Party announced an alliance with Kuchek

Khan's Jangalis, with whom they agreed to form a Soviet Socialist Republic of Gilan.²⁸

During the summer and fall of 1920 the Jangalis captured Rasht and a large part of Gilan and their militia expanded to 1,500 fighters. Kuchek Khan's ambitions were not purely local but always had been nationalist. By the end of the year the Jangalis were preparing to march on Tehran. Indeed the authority of Iran's central government was weak or nonexistent in much of the country, as patriots everywhere condemned its support for the agreement with Britain.²⁹ It was in this atmosphere that Reza Khan, an officer in the aforementioned Cossack Brigade, began his rise to power, eventually becoming Reza Shah Pahlavi (r. 1925–41). He remains a controversial ruler in historical memory. In the popular imagination he is a British puppet, put in power to carry out Britain's imperial policy toward Iran then deposed by his master when he behaved too cockily. Critical historical facts are cited to support this interpretation: as Reza Khan, the future shah collaborated with the British in October 1920 to remove all Russian officers of the Cossack Brigade, a move that enabled him to rise from colonel to the rank of general. Four months later, in February 1921, the contingent of Cossacks that he commanded at Qazvin provided military support for the coup d'état carried out by a small group headed by Sayyid Zia Tabatabai, editor of a Tehran newspaper that generally supported British policy, including the controversial 1919 agreement. After the coup Ahmad Shah appointed Sayyid Zia prime minister and Reza Khan as commander of the military.³⁰

But Reza Shah is a contradictory figure in historical memory because many of the same Iranians who condemned him as a British puppet and a cruel dictator also credited him with saving Iran from national disintegration during the early 1920s. For example, soon after the coup he and Tabatabai canceled the 1919 agreement with Britain and negotiated a treaty with the Soviet Union that provided for the withdrawal of Red Army troops from Gilan, among other benefits. The treaty with Moscow enabled Reza Khan to prepare the Cossacks to confront the threat posed by the Jangalis. The Cossacks were ready to march into Gilan by the fall of 1921 and successfully occupied Rasht in November. Jangali units were defeated, and Kuchek Khan fled into the mountains, where he apparently died of exposure to the cold night temperatures. When his corpse was found, his head was carried back to Tehran for triumphal public display.³¹

As Reza Khan consolidated power, many nationalists initially worked with him because they perceived him as creating a strong central government that served the people by developing a nationwide public education

system, building modern highways and a cross-country railroad, and promoting industrialization. Indeed between 1921 and 1925, first as minister of war (until 1923) and then as prime minister, he earned respect as a reformer. By 1925 the Majlis was ready to depose not just Ahmad Shah (who already had moved to France) but the entire Qajar dynasty and bestow the mantle of kingship on Reza Khan. He had adopted the family name of Pahlavi, which also happened to be the name of the pre-Islamic Persian script during the Sasanian Empire.

CONCLUSION

This detailed narrative has been necessary in order to be able to extract broader themes. In this respect historian Touraj Atabaki has suggested that Iran was not static during World War I but a place in which the nationalist imaginary was being refashioned into a broad acceptance of Iran as a distinct political community. He contends that politically aware people reached a form of consensus that valued a strong centralized government that could deal with all the problems that had been stirred up by the war: national, physical, and economic insecurity; ethnic, sectarian, and tribal conflicts; exploitation by foreigners; relative backwardness in comparison with neighbors such as Russia and the Ottoman Empire; and incompetent government at the national and local levels. The political elite came to value the idea of a strong-minded reformer as the savior of their country. This marked a huge change in mentality compared with the situation twenty years earlier, when the educated elites perceived powerful ideas such as constitutional government as the source of salvation for their country.

Yet was this unique to Iran? Iran had not disintegrated as a result of World War I, although its powerful neighbor, the Ottoman Empire and its ally, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, had. Tsarist Russia and even Germany had been transformed completely as a result of the same war. All of these countries experienced some form of national and political trauma. It is interesting that the notion of a strong central government in which one person is a central decision maker had widespread appeal after a traumatic decade. I am reminded of an argument put forth by another historian of contemporary Iran, Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi, who has written that modernity is not the homemade product of a unique Western rationality, as asserted by Max Weber a century ago and later universalized by modernization theorists, but a globalized network of power and knowledge.³²

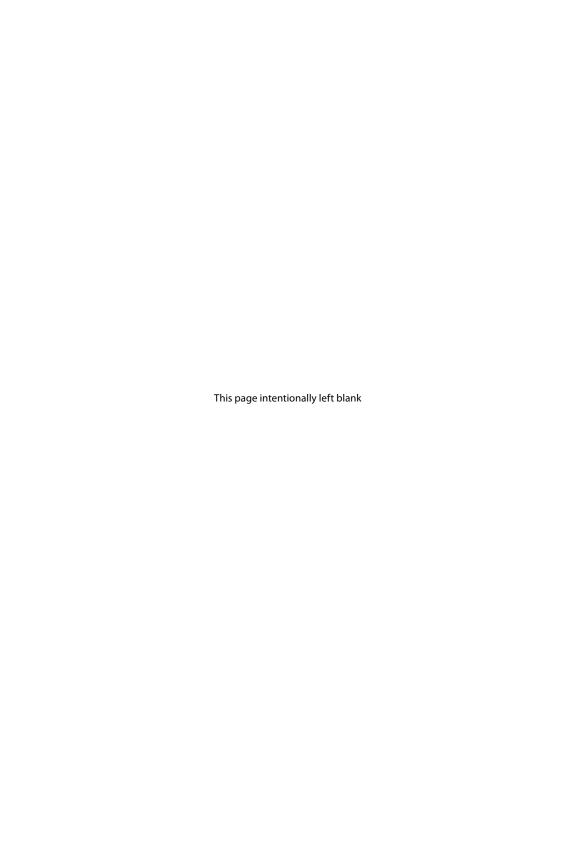
NOTES

- On the Anglo-Russian accord, see Eric Hooglund, "Anglo-Russian Agreement (1907)," 105.
- See further Peter Hopkirk, The Great Game; and Malcolm Yapp, "The Legend of the Great Game."
- 3. A succinct overview of Fath Ali Shah's reign is found in Mansoureh Ettehadieh, "Fath Ali Shah Qajar"; for a more detailed account of his rule, written by an Iranian chronicler in the late nineteenth century, see Hasan-e Fasa'i, *History of Persia under Qajar Rule*, trans. Heribert Busse, 77–230.
- 4. For the terms of the Treaty of Gulistan and an analysis of how its implementation prepared the ground for another war between Iran and Russia, see P. W. Avery, "An Enquiry into the Outbreak of the Second Russo-Persian War, 1826–28," 17–45.
- 5. See further Ann Lambton, Qajar Persia,120–122, 295.
- For an interesting portrait of Nasir ed-Din Shah's conflicted attitude toward modernization, see Abbas Amanat, Pivot of the Universe.
- 7. J. Calmard, "Anglo-Persian War (1856-57).
- For an overview of Qajar rule and Iranian society up to 1890, see Ervand Abrahamian, Iran between Two Revolutions, 36–69.
- 9. For an overview of the influence and role of the ulema, see Lambton, *Qajar Persia*, 277–300; for a detailed analysis of clergy-state relations in the nineteenth century, see Hamid Algar, *Religion and State in Iran*, 1785–1906, especially 45–136, 152–83.
- For a detailed analysis of the role of the secret societies in the Constitutional Revolution, see Lambton, Qajar Persia, 301–18.
- 11. Lambton (ibid., 321–22) argues that the protesters of 1905–6 originally did not perceive their movement as a revolution but rather as an uprising (*qiyam*) against injustice.
- 12. Algar, Religion and State, 71-74; Abrahamian, Iran between Two Revolutions, 81-92.
- 13. On Mirza Malkum Khan's career and important role as an advocate for democratic government, see Hamid Algar, *Mirza Malkom Khan*.
- 14. On the background of Rasulzade, see Nassereddin Parvin, "Iran-e Now."
- 15. Ibid.
- 16. On the development of Iran's first free press, see Neguin Nabavi, "Spreading the Word."
- 17. For details of the struggle between the royalists and the constitutionalists in 1907 to 1909, see Abrahamian, *Iran between Two Revolutions*, 92–101.
- 18. A detailed account of the period between July 1909 and December 1911 is found in Robert A. McDaniel, *The Shuster Mission and the Persian Constitutional Revolution*, 89–210.
- 19. Abrahamian, Iran between Two Revolutions, 110.
- 20. On events in 1914 and 1915, see further Mansoureh Ettehadieh, "Constitutional Revolution iv. The Aftermath."
- 21. Touraj Atabaki, "The First World War, Great Power Rivalries, and the Emergence of a Political Community in Iran," 2–3; for details about the provisional government, see Mansourch Ettehadieh, "The Provisional Government."

- 22. Ettehadieh, "The Provisional Government," 181n2.
- 23. On the South Persia Rifles, see Floreeda Safiri, "South Persia Rifles."
- 24. On Wassmuss, see further Christopher Sykes, Wassmuss, the Persian Lawrence.
- For details of the Jangali movement, see Pezhman Dailami, "Jangali Movement"; and Abrahamian, *Iran between Two Revolutions*, 111–12.
- See further Abrahamian, Iran between Two Revolutions, 114–17; and Nikki Keddie, Roots of Revolution, 78–84.
- 27. Abrahamian, Iran between Two Revolutions, 114-15.
- 28. On events in Gilan from 1917 to 1920, see further Dailami, "Jangali Movement."
- 29. Abrahamian, Iran between Two Revolutions, 116.
- 30. For a balanced analysis of the debates over Reza Shah's purported ties to the British, see Michael P. Zirinsky, "The Rise of Reza Khan"; on how average Iranians viewed the 1921 coup, see Richard Cottam, *Nationalism in Iran*, 191–95.
- 31. Christian Bromberger, "Rasht. i. The City."
- 32. Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi, Refashioning Iran, 4.

PART VII

Memories and Legacies of World War I



The "Young Turk Zeitgeist" in the Middle Eastern Uprisings in the Aftermath of World War I

Alp Yenen

At the end of World War I Winston Churchill said: "The war of the giants has ended; the quarrels of the pygmies have begun." Retrospectively the historical impact of the political struggles that occurred from the beginning of the Russian Revolution of 1917 until the abolition of the Ottoman caliphate in 1924 (the aftermath period as I refer to it in this chapter) was far greater than that of the battles won and lost during the war years. The aftermath of World War I is a complex historical period in its own right, which earns it special attention from historians. The history of the aftermath period in the Middle East by itself proves to be a multifaceted subject with severe consequences, which, according to David Fromkin, brought up a new world order after a "formative" period "in which everything seemed (and may indeed have been) possible."

IS THERE A UNIONIST FACTOR AMONG THE MIDDLE EASTERN UPRISINGS IN THE AFTERMATH OF WORLD WAR I?

At the end of the war the Ottoman Empire had been defeated and occupied by the Western powers. The Committee of Union and Progress (İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti: CUP), which ruled the empire since 1913, was now publicly discredited and formally dissolved. The Young Turk leaders—Enver Paşa, Talat Paşa, and Cemal Paşa—fled secretly into exile, thus escaping prosecution for their war crimes. Meanwhile CUP's underground and paramilitary branches started to organize resistance networks in Istanbul and Anatolia: the so-called Unionist Factor. ⁴ Soon after

the Greek occupation the CUP-led resistance culminated in a nationwide resistance movement under the iconic leadership of Mustafa Kemal Paşa. In general terms similar resistance to colonial or foreign forces as in Anatolia can be found also in Greater Syria (Bilad al-Sham), and Mesopotamia. In Iraq large-scale uprisings against the British administration occurred as early as May 1919 among the Kurdish tribes. Syria was the first to rebel, under the rule of the leaders of the Arab Revolt of 1916, nominally Prince Faysal and de facto the Young Arab Society (al-Fatat).5 The British forces left Syria for the French (to whom the territories had been secretly promised) in the autumn of 1919, which gave rise to broadscale uprisings in urban and rural areas in Syria. These Middle Eastern uprisings against foreign-infidel rule reached a new height in the year 1920, as Syrian resistance against the French occupation forces came to a disastrous climax at the Battle of Maysalun on July 24, 1920. Meanwhile in neighboring Iraq British occupation forces were busy struggling from summer to autumn of 1920 against the Great Iraqi Revolt, which could only be stopped by major air strikes. In Anatolia the primary conflict was between the British-supported Greek forces on the western front but also against the Armenian Republic on the Caucasian front and against the French in the south, in addition to the Anatolian civil war between the Istanbul and Ankara partisans.

For many scholars the most important impact of the aftermath of World War I in the Middle East was the formation of modern nation-states out of the ashes of the Ottoman Empire. This assertion implies a teleological or at least a nation-centric approach to the study of the aftermath period, which does not necessarily illuminate the fog of war of the Middle Eastern uprisings. The Middle Eastern uprisings in Anatolia, the Levant, and Mesopotamia in the immediate postwar years are studied mostly in narratives of distinct national movements as well as in diplomatic histories of the peace settlement. In a recent article, however, Michael Provence called attention to the weakness of these nationalist histories, arguing that "the revolts do not fit neatly into the narratives of 'national awakenings' posited by the intellectual histories of the region." Provence's argument that the Middle Eastern uprisings need to be seen in a wider context needs greater scholarly attention.

The Middle Eastern uprisings in the aftermath period were indeed carried out by local elites and popular masses and mostly within their future national framework. Nevertheless, according to Charles Tilly and Sidney Tarrow, in analyzing contentious politics it is still necessary "to

look beyond the nation-state at processes such as...the framing of local issues as the results of global problems, and the formation of transnational networks, and movement coalitions." Therefore we must ask: is there a connection among the Middle Eastern uprisings in the aftermath period?

If we look for transnational networks and movement coalitions connecting these local uprisings, the historical sources deliver amazing stories on the verge of conspiracy theories, which need further scrutiny. As early as November 1918, shortly after the Unionist leaders disappeared into exile, Sir Eyre Crowe from the Foreign Office suspected that a "powerful international organization" existed. According to his fears, "the heart and soul of all revolutionary and terroristic movements have invariably been the Jews, the Bolsheviks and the Turkish Committee of Union and Progress." 10 Especially after the events of the Iraqi revolt in 1920 British Intelligence saw the various Middle Eastern uprisings as the result of an international conspiracy in which the CUP played a crucial role as the "hidden hand." According to this British conspiracy theory, the exiled CUP leaders, German militarists, and Russian Bolsheviks were jointly planning and executing a political conspiracy in cooperation with local Arab and Turkish insurgents in order to throw off the yoke of British control over Muslim Asia. The bizarreness of these British archival sources as well as the diplomatic imposition of new nation-states made historians dismiss the possible ties between these Middle Eastern uprisings and cleared the way for sectarian nationalist narratives.

This notion of the hidden hand of the CUP in the postwar uprisings extends the arguments made by Eric J. Zürcher in his seminal book *The Unionist Factor* to the larger Middle Eastern setting. Zürcher convincingly demonstrated the role of the CUP within the organizational structures, personnel, and leadership of the Anatolian resistance movement as well as the existence of a Young Turk legacy in the Turkish political culture in the first half of the twentieth century. This chapter examines whether a Unionist Factor existed in the Middle Eastern uprisings discussed earlier. The very strong discourse about the machinations of Young Turks behind the uprisings needs critical attention. In fact the exiled CUP leaders themselves ambitiously created plots very similar to the conspiracy theories circling about them. Unlike in Anatolia, however, the uprisings in the Levant and Mesopotamia were not organized or executed by the CUP, even though they strongly resembled the patterns and spirit of the Young Turks.

By evaluating the British conspiracy theory about the causes of unrest in the Middle East, I show that these sources nevertheless reveal an awakening of Muslim-nationalist struggle against the West. Instead of the Young Turk "hidden hand," there was a Young Turk zeitgeist that the Middle Eastern insurgents generally shared. The dynamics and character of the local insurgencies were reminiscent of a Young Turk culture. This Young Turk "ghost" is visible in cultivation of Ottoman-Muslim nationalism, the komitadji-style organization of political activism, and the call to jihad in the anti-imperial mass struggle. Provence's argument of a "common Ottoman genealogy of armed struggle, nationalism, and patriotism" of the anticolonial insurgencies in the Arab East after World War I needs to be put into the intellectual and political context of the Young Turk era. This Young Turk zeitgeist provides a broader framework for the analysis of late and post-Ottoman Middle Eastern politics.

Instead of offering a historical reconstruction of the Young Turk zeitgeist among the Middle Eastern uprisings, I assess the currents and fallacies of the prevalent historiography. At the heart of the problem lies what Maurus Reinkowski calls "ideological opacity" and its erroneous interpretations. 15 The ideological world of the Young Turk era was an eclectic amalgamation of fragments of different ideologies. 16 The problem with some of these interpretations comes from the notion that these were allegedly conflicting or rival ideologies, such as nationalism, Islam, Ottomanism, and also socialism to a certain extent after the Russian Revolution. Hence transideological interchange has long been regarded as unnatural. The aftermath period was therefore regarded as the heyday of such "unholy alliances." Contemporary British officials wrongly suspected that the machinations of cabals and secret societies were the responsible force behind the transnational and transideological aspects of the Middle Eastern uprisings. Modern Middle Eastern history writing, however, went the opposite direction by erroneously downplaying the transnational ties among the local movements as well as by separating the ideological fragments from each other in favor of genuine nationalist movements, marking ethnonationalism as the dominant corporate identity. Revisionist studies pointed out particular fallacies of this interpretation, but a common ground still has not been established. I argue for the necessity of an alternate reading of this period, with a particular focus on transnational relations, fluid political identities, and cultural resemblance of revolutionary movements of the Middle East. The emergence of nation-states in 1922 long blurred these political currents of Middle Eastern history.

THE YOUNG TURK CONSPIRACY (IN) THEORY AND REALITY

The puzzling question in the aftermath of World War I was why allegedly distinct and hostile groups in the Middle East were revolting simultaneously, similarly, and collectively against the Allied occupation. The most prominent answer to this question by contemporary British officials was that the uprisings were a conspiracy organized and executed by the CUP and other cabals. This Young Turk conspiracy theory was formulated in its most famous form in three reports prepared right after the alarming events in the summer and fall of 1920 by Major Norbert N. E. Bray, a Special Intelligence Officer working for the India Office in Iraq. 18 It is necessary to evaluate whether a conspiratorial Unionist Factor was behind the Middle Eastern uprisings. As I show, Bray's report was not all fiction but rather was based on an assortment of intelligence reports collected mostly in Europe and Turkey by radio and human sources delivering generally accurate intelligence. Indeed very similar plans were made by exiled Unionists in multiple regions to revolutionize the Muslim masses against colonial occupations. Allegations that Enver was toying with "Pan-Islamic, Bolshevist, Pan-Turkish and all disgruntled forces" to find further help were not wrong after all. 19 Major Bray was also right when he claimed that Talat had been trying to establish cooperation with the Syrian and Iraqi insurgents, Egyptian nationalists, and Indian Muslims as well as with Russian Bolsheviks. In explaining these transnational and transideological connections, however, patterns of conspiratorial and paranoid thinking led to incredible theories that not only found currency within British officialdom but were also covered in the international press.20

The Young Turk Revolution of 1908 was seen by British officials as a Jewish-Freemason conspiracy against British ambitions in the Middle East. The Young Turk conspiracy theory of 1908 was based on Orientalist assumptions that the Young Turks were incapable of organizing a constitutional revolution: the question of agency was explained by ideas of anti-Semitism that presumed the "hidden hand" of the Jew, in form of crypto-Jews and Freemasons, behind the Young Turks. This was of course totally preposterous. The reception of the CUP as an agent of chaos by foreign observers also needs to be put in the Orientalist tradition of interpreting every Muslim resistance to the Islamic-Sunni order as "super conspiracies dedicated to atheism, republicanism, free love and general mayhem." As British policymakers were shocked by the occurrence of

anti-British movements in their Islamic dominions after the end of the war, they started reading the events according to the familiar template of the Young Turk conspiracy theory of 1908, which again attributed agency to secret cabals and outside forces, namely the "Enver & Talaat & the CUP-Jew-German-Bolshevik combination." ²⁴ In Fromkin's words, "[t]he C.U.P., the continued influence of Germany even in defeat, pan-Islam, Bolshevism, Russia—all had come together and were poised to swoop down upon the British Empire at its greatest points of vulnerability." ²⁵

According to Major Bray's reports, the Middle Eastern unrest was a "concerted action" directed by secret societies originating in Berlin and Moscow. Many detached local groups like the "Pan-Arabs, the Nationalists, the disgruntled Effendi, the tribesman..., and the fanatical priest" were now rebelling collectively against the British rule in Iraq but also elsewhere, so Bray claimed an "outside influence...making concerted action possible." According to Bray, "a very important meeting" between Talat Paşa representing the CUP and Turkish nationalists and an emissary of Faysal on behalf of the Arab nationalists was held around November 15, 1919, in Montreux then a second one in December in St. Moritz. Other sources corroborate the existence of these meetings. Talat Paşa was indeed in Switzerland from October 23 until November 19, 1919. He was back in Switzerland as late as December 24, staying there until mid-January 1920. In addition German archival sources document a meeting of Young Turk leaders in St. Moritz in January 1920.

Bray claims that during these meetings a preliminary alliance was formed by the exiled CUP leaders, Mustafa Kemal Paşa, and Arab nationalists. In a larger historical context this was in fact a time in which Iraqi and Syrian nationalists were considering joining the Turkish national movement in order to defeat the common Western enemy.³¹ During the Arab raid on British troops in Dayr al-Zor on December 11, 1919, and the Turkish campaign against French troops in Cilicia on January 20, 1920, there were many contacts between Turkish and Arab insurgents.³² It is known that Mustafa Kemal and Faysal were trying to establish an official and lasting cooperation between the Arab and Turkish nationalists.³³ Faysal made no secret of "his sympathy and admiration for the Kemalist movement in Turkey."34 In January 1920 a secret Arab delegation was sent to Mustafa Kemal Paşa. The negotiations were aborted by Faysal, however, who would later regret his hasty withdrawal from the negotiations before the final battle against the French in July 1920.³⁵ Even after Faysal's defeat, there were contacts between the Arab insurgents of Antakya under Ibrahim Hananu and the Kemalist representatives in Maraş.³⁶

According to Bray's report, an "Asiatic-Islamic Federation" was founded to unite and coordinate these diverse movements.³⁷ Founded by the exiled CUP leaders, the preamble of the charter of the Union of the Islamic Revolutionary Societies (İslam İhtilal Cemiyetleri İttihadı) was astonishingly similar to Bray's claims:

The aim of the Society is to make the Muslims—who are used like slaves, enslaved and dominated by the imperialists and capitalists—masters of their own fate under the leadership of Turkey; to ensure their free and independent organization within their national culture [kendi milli medeniyetleri dahilinde]; and to liberate them from captivity. The aim of the Society is to create the organization necessary to realize the aforementioned goal, by uplifting and uniting the Muslims spiritually [and materially] [manen ve maddeten].³⁸

According to Bray, it was decided to search for assistance in Bolshevik Russia. A program of cooperation between the exiled Unionists and the Bolsheviks did indeed exist, which according to Enver Paşa included the "liberation of the Muslim nations" and the "adoption of socialist principles in liberated lands on the condition of respecting the traditions and nature of internal affairs [idare-i dahiliyesinde esasat ve bünyeye tevafuk ettirmek şartı ile]."39 In Bray's report, Amir Shakib Arslan, trusted by both the Unionists and Faysal, was chosen to go to Moscow to negotiate with the Soviets. 40 Talat Paşa wrote to Mustafa Kemal Paşa that a representative of Faysal had approached a colleague of his (probably Shakib Arslan). According to Talat, the Arab nationalists were so disappointed with the Allies that now they were considering joining a Turkish-Arab dual monarchy modeled after Austria-Hungary. 41 The British archival sources document that Arslan declared to Maksim Litvinov, the leading Soviet diplomat in Europe, that "all [Arab] hatred against the Turk had been dispelled and all that was now wanted was mutual trust and combination in support of the common cause."42

Thus a very real and present conspiracy was lurking beneath Bray's reports. A. L. Macfie came to the conclusion that "while the information collected was for the most part accurate enough, the conclusions drawn were dangerously misleading." As John Ferris concluded, the British fears of a conspiracy "were not unreasonable." Ferris sees the problem in interpretation of a "complex foe": "The problem was interpretation. Britain suffered from too much and too little intelligence, and a complex

foe. Its enemies were in a real conspiracy, but a dysfunctional one, resting on opportunism and ignorance. They lied to each other, and enable one another's fantasies. There was not one fantasy, or conspiracy, but many of both."⁴⁵

This "complexity" of Britain's foes—the CUP, local Turkish and Arab insurgents, and Bolsheviks—assumes that they were "unnatural" allies: Arabs and Turks, Nationalists and pan-Islamists, Muslims and Bolsheviks, and so forth. Obviously the British misinterpreted—or mystified—the nature of the relations among the different political actors in the East. The reaction to Indian activist Sheikh Mushir Hosain Kidwai's book *The Sword against Islam* summarizes the official British perception of these connections: 46

it is the gospel of the latest form of C.U.P. Bolshevism directed against the British Empire more especially in India and Egypt. It shows more clearly than everything I have seen yet how this movement is connected up with every form of revolutionary activism throughout the world: C.U.P., Bolshevism, Indian and Egyptian nationalism, anti-Zionism, Sinn Fein, the extreme Labour Party, Japanese Asiaticism, [and] Persian "democracy."

The exiled Young Turk leaders had indeed political ties to Germans,⁴⁸ Bolshevists,⁴⁹ Kemalists,⁵⁰ Arab nationalists around Faysal, Indian revolutionaries,⁵¹ Irish Sinn Feiners,⁵² and Egyptian nationalists.⁵³ The British were essentially not wrong in suspecting the Young Turks, but "these parties were aligned with but not allied to each other."⁵⁴ A Unionist Factor in terms of the CUP taking "the first steps to organize a national resistance movement...by establishing an underground network" as in the Turkish War of Independence cannot be extended to the uprisings in Greater Syria and Mesopotamia.⁵⁵ As Fromkin and Satia argue, the British wrongly interpreted these separate but connatural local events as the single well-organized plot of a world conspiracy.⁵⁶

The CUP was filling an important gap in explaining the uprisings. The CUP was everything and nothing at the same time. Its pragmatic and eclectic use of allegedly conflicting policies and ideologies of (pan-)Turkism, pan-Islamism, and Ottomanism as well as liberalism, socialism, and nationalism hindered the explicit and definite political categorization of Young Turks and other similar Middle Eastern movements. On the practical side, however, thanks to this political ambiguity of the CUP, anything could be attributed to them. Therefore the CUP

after the end of the war was able to "embrace pan-Islamic, Egyptian Nationalist, possibly Bolshevic [sic], and even Indian Nationalist activity." ⁵⁷ But the CUP was not regarded as a political organization with pragmatic policies in cooperation with foreign counterparts and strategic partners, as was in fact the case, but rather as a mysterious political phantom capable of changing disguises and infiltrating and manipulating diverse political spheres regardless of "natural" boundaries. Therefore it was very common to conclude that "[t]he ostensible bolshevik, pan-islamic and nationalist propaganda are [sic] all apparently organized and controlled in the near East by [Young] Turks." ⁵⁸ In the perception of the British officials, the CUP and Bolsheviks merged to a single political body in the aftermath of World War I, because it was wrong to think that "there is or ever has been any dividing line between the CUP and bolshevism. The force behind all these movements is the same."

In this discourse of conspiracy Enver Paşa had a key role. He was in fact a fugitive revolutionary leader condemned for war crimes, thus connecting the German militarists with Russian Bolshevists. Enver indeed had a great impact on Muslims all over the world as the revolutionary hero from a modest family who became the warrior son-in-law of the Ottoman sultan-caliph. "Enver was linked to everyone," so he was prominent not only in British Intelligence reports but also in the British and international press. According to the *New York Times*: "It is to Enver Pasha's talent for intrigue that the union between Moslems and Hindus, the most striking and dangerous feature of the movement, is chiefly due."

Islam and its relationship to nationalism and Bolshevism were also a problem in interpretation. Islam itself was seen as a secret society characterized by anti-Western tendencies. ⁶² In a political report the British Intelligence chief in Constantinople insisted on the existence of ongoing conspiracies "which, with the concomitant evil of Pan-Islamism, seem to fill the near horizon day by day with greater power of disturbing the British world." ⁶³ The potential alliance between Bolshevists and Muslim revolutionaries highly alarmed the British officials. ⁶⁴ T. E. Lawrence (of Arabia) was even talking about a "wahabi-like Moslem edition of Bolshevism."

Not all fiction about the Young Turk conspiracy was fabricated by the British. Local dissidents, functioning as informants for the British Intelligence, also were relying on and enhancing the Unionist Factor discourse for their own political agenda. For instance, forgery reports by Armenian nationalists claimed an identical conspiracy between Mustafa Kemal Paşa, Enver Paşa, Faysal, and the Bolsheviks in order to mobilize

more support for the Armenian cause. 66 Some other alarming but unreliable reports by local contenders like Ibn Su^cud claimed that the Sharifian forces in the Hijaz, Syria, and Iraq, Turkish nationalists in Anatolia, and the Wafd Party in Egypt were waging a jihad against the British forces.⁶⁷ Meanwhile the Ottoman government officials in Constantinople were continuously associating Mustafa Kemal with Enver. 68 Even though the Unionist Factor in the Anatolian resistance movement was mostly real, part of it was purely discursive. 69 Its purpose was to criminalize and demonize the Anatolian resistance movement in the public discourse by associating it with the CUP. This discursive aspect of the Unionist Factor derived from the paranoid and conspiratorial thinking in the British officialdom and among the anti-Unionist Ottoman elites. Soon Mustafa Kemal needed to distance himself publicly from Enver. In an interview he said: "It is untrue that we are working with Enver Pasha." Dissident local voices all over the Middle East were relying on the negative discourse of the Unionist Factor, which shows again how reasonable and widespread this Young Turk discourse was by then.

The Young Turks were held responsible for the otherwise unexplainable puzzle that various Muslim groups were engaged in uniform struggles against the British Empire and its local collaborators at the end of the war. The Young Turk conspiracy theory of the aftermath period gave an esoteric meaning to the correlation of incidents that were otherwise "naturally" unconnected or hostile to each other. These transnational and transideological connections somehow resembled a Young Turk "ghost," which does not necessarily postulate a Young Turk intrigue but rather a Young Turk zeitgeist on the part of Middle Eastern insurgents.

THE YOUNG TURK ZEITGEIST OF THE MIDDLE EASTERN UPRISINGS

In his dissertation Nabeel Audeh argues that "the ideological legacy of Foreign Office views on the Young Turks [has been] inherited by, and incorporated into, Anglo-American historiography since the First World War." Immediately after the war the newly emerging Arab nationalist and Kemalist historiography traditions followed this trend in order to discredit the late Ottoman state generally and the Young Turk rule in particular. Therefore the Ottoman legacy in the post-Ottoman world was long ignored. Nevertheless some revisionist studies have produced inspiring results on the impact of the Ottoman legacy in the modern Middle East and the Balkans. Most of these studies deal not directly

with the aftermath period but with long-term aftereffects. Beyond the general Ottoman legacy that is even evident in early independent successor states like Serbia and Greece, a further Young Turk legacy can be seen in later successor states with predominantly Muslim populations. According to Provence, the common Ottoman background based on the identity constructive experience in imperial and military education institutions as well as the military struggles of the last Ottoman decade connect the postwar uprisings in Anatolia and the Arab East.⁷⁴ I argue that the Middle Eastern insurgents shared the same political culture: a Young Turk zeitgeist characterized by cultivation of Ottoman-Muslim nationalism, komitadji-style organization of political activism, and framing the anti-imperialist mass struggle as a jihad. Among British officials Admiral Richard Webb, the British high commissioner in Constantinople, was one of the few who correctly sensed this cultural dimension of the Unionist Factor:

Whether the organizers...can properly be called Committee [of Union and Progress] men or not is a question of labels. They may differ from the Committee to some extent in personality.... They may differ in minor points of sentiment. They may differ even more in method. Their fundamental character is, however, the same.... They want no foreign interference or foreign protection.... They want to fight Europe, and, above all, England, with the weapons of pan-Islamism and pan-Turanianism. They aspire to sign, not the death warrant of the Empire, but a lease of new life. 75

CULTIVATION OF OTTOMAN-MUSLIM NATIONALISM

One significant feature of the Young Turk zeitgeist is the cultivation of Ottoman-Muslim nationalism, from which the distinct ethnonationalist ideologies emerged later during the interwar years. Here I follow the concept of Ottoman-Muslim nationalism developed by Zürcher and extend it to other non-Turkish Muslims of the Ottoman Empire. The forerunners of Turkish and Arab nationalist movements emerged in the last decades of the Ottoman Empire. But scholarly debates in Middle Eastern Studies have reached an impasse instead of common ground in regard to the questions of evolution and political impact of nationalism. To I regard the main cause of the disagreement to be the interpretation of ideological

opacity: the relationship of (Arab and Turkish) nationalism to other corporate identities like Ottomanism and Islam. Yusuf Akçura's *Three Policies* (1904) established the discoursive tradition of seeing Ottomanism, pan-Islam, and Turkism as contradictory and rival ideologies.⁷⁸ It is undeniable that Young Turks relied on all these ideologies interchangeably, so their ideological opacity is generally explained by reducing it to mere political opportunism.⁷⁹

Three discursive dichotomies in the history writing of Middle Eastern nationalist movements have long hindered the explanation of the ideological opacity of Ottoman-Muslim nationalism. These three dichotomies are mostly based on "methodological nationalism," which makes nation-states, nations, and nationalism into a major analytical category.⁸⁰ The first dichotomy is between Turkish and Arab nationalisms in the late Ottoman Empire: the claim that Arab and Turkish nationalism emerged as rival and hostile mass-movements. The second dichotomy is between nationalism and Ottomanism. The literature of this dichotomy generally underestimates the late Ottoman Empire as a functioning multinational state and the Ottoman society as an established social system against the rising nationalist movements. The third dichotomy is between nationalism and Islam, based on the idea of an alleged incompatibility and rivalry between these corporate identities.81 These three narrative tropes have prevented the establishment of a common framework for studying Ottoman-Muslim nationalism in the Young Turk era.

The first dichotomy between Turkish and Arab nationalism derives from the argument that Arab and Turkish nationalism emerged in an atmosphere of political rivalry during the turn of the century and that this animosity played a principal role during the last decade of Ottoman politics, especially during the Arab Revolt. The most prominent and influential narrative of an early emergence of Turkism as a political ideology was put forward by M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, following in the footsteps of David Kushner. Hanioğlu relies on an unbeatable corpus of intellectual, political, and private writings of leading Young Turk figures from the prerevolutionary era and claims that the Young Turks were adherents of Turkish ethnonationalism prior to the Young Turk revolution of 1908, even as early as 1902. 82 As impressive as his scholarship is, his argument is disputed. For instance, after praising Hanioğlu's work on the early Young Turk movement as "the definitive study, unlikely to be surpassed," another expert on the Young Turk era, Feroz Ahmad, criticizes Hanioğlu's interpretation of Turkish nationalism, because it disregards the later Young Turk period (1908–18) and is based mostly on the personal thoughts of individual figures.⁸³ Although both Hanioğlu and Kushner are more or less cautious in implying political consequences of the prerevolutionary intellectual and cultural development of Turkism in the following years of Young Turk rule, 84 they made way for other scholars who are more ambitious in seeing Turkish nationalism as the monocausal force behind the Ottoman cataclysm. Following Hanioğlu's arguments, reductionist interpretations that claim that CUP policies (1913–18) were guided primarily by Turkish ethnonationalism gained currency.⁸⁵ Although Turkism was an emerging cultural and political current, it is nevertheless disputed how far the CUP policies were actually driven by ideas of Turkish ethnonationalism alone. The problem is that many scholars reduce the Young Turk era to a period of Turkification in internal affairs and pan-Turkism in foreign affairs. The pan-Turkism thesis is an especially rough simplification that needs to be taken with a grain of salt regardless of its numerous scholarly references.86 The argument of Turkification—in many aspects undeniable but also overstated in the literature—needs to be contextualized when it comes to the Arab provinces.⁸⁷

The emergence of Arab nationalism was long based on George Antonius's epic narrative of the "awakening" of Arab national opposition to the "Turkish yoke," coming to its natural climax during the Arab Revolt of 1916. ** This narrative was repeatedly revised and corrected by several generations of renowned scholars of Arab history. It is now broadly established that the Arab Revolt was not a popular nationalist movement but rather a separatist minority insurrection sponsored and magnified by the British war propaganda and later by postwar Arab nationalists. ** Most scholars now agree that most of the Arabs remained loyal to the Ottoman Empire until its disappearance. To quote Khoury, Arab nationalists were still "a humble minority" in Syria even in 1920. Arab nationalism emerged as a political ideology in the 1920s or even as late as the 1930s, as some other scholars argue. **

Even so, many scholars of Arab history still explain the early emergence of Arabism as a defensive reaction to Turkification policies of the CUP government. Attempts have been made to rehabilitate Antonius's Turkish-Arab dichotomy thesis in order to predate the emergence of Arab nationalism. Hanioğlu again provided some critical but not unproblematic evidence from the pre-1908 private correspondence of Young Turk figures. He showed the presence of chauvinistic and colonialist sentiments among some Turkish nationalists from the CUP toward the Arabs: "The fact that they were of the same religion as the Arabs was not significant to the Young Turks. They saw themselves as bringing

civilization to the tribal society of the Arabs and protecting it against Western Imperialism."⁹³ It is questionable, however, how far these individual sentiments can be generalized. Other scholars of Ottoman history provided evidence from the era of Young Turk rule that Islamist and Ottomanist policies were primarily directed toward the Arabs instead of policies of Turkification.⁹⁴ After an analysis of Arab and Young Turk political relations, Hasan Kayalı delivers a more balanced interpretation than the prevailing intellectual histories of Turkish and Arab nationalisms:

However, they [Young Turks] upheld the imperial polity and multiethnic agendas rather than implement a Turkish nationalist program in the conduct of state affairs. In fact, Turkish nationalist activity continued to be restricted to the cultural-literary domain. The CUP as a political party subscribed to Ottomanist and Islamist political ideals. Like Arabs, Turks (including Unionist Turks) carried multiple layers of identities. Some Unionists were attracted to Turkism, but cultural identities and allegiances did not correspond to political agendas. ⁹⁵

This of course does not mean that there were no tensions between Arabs and Turks or that ethnonationalism played no role. Rather, the mutual exclusivity of Turkish and Arab ethnonationalisms was more often secondary to the inclusive ideas of Ottoman-Islamic solidarity. ⁹⁶ The discursive dichotomy between Turks and Arabs was one of the main pillars of the perspective of contemporary British observers. ⁹⁷ On March 22, 1920, Winston Churchill said at the House of Commons: "There are the Arabs who have been disturbed by the [French] occupation of Syria, and who are inclined now, for the first time, in many ways to make common cause with the Turkish Nationalists, thus uniting two forces by whose division our policy has hitherto prospered."

The second dichotomy of nationalism and Ottomanism is closely associated with the first one and derives from the idea that the Ottoman state, society, and civic identity had no virtue so that alternative nationalist identities emerged to replace the Ottoman rule. Michael Reynolds argues that most of the studies have illustrated late Ottoman history "not so much as the final era of an empire but as the prelude to (or resumption of) several distinct national histories" and the Ottoman Empire itself "as a realm of competing nationalisms." William L. Cleveland once warned that late Ottoman history "cannot be viewed merely as a prelude to Arab nationalism," because "the late Ottoman state had internal viability" of its

own.¹⁰⁰ Hanioğlu also correctly criticizes the fallacy in seeing "Ottomanism and Turkism in a distinctly essentialist manner. As a consequence, it imagines a false completion between two discrete, monolithic, and unchanging ideologies; Ottomanism on the one hand and Turkism (or Turkish nationalism) on the other. In reality, however, these concepts possessed fluid, blurred boundaries even after the Balkan Wars." ¹⁰¹

Modernist and nationalist history-writing traditions dismiss the Ottoman Empire as a failed multinational state ruled by "Oriental despotism." Peculiarly, when it comes to the narrative of the "Turkish yoke," the Ottoman Empire is illustrated as a brutal authoritarian state. But when it comes to the narrative of the cultural development and national emancipation of Ottoman minorities, the Ottoman society is depicted as a fertile ground for sectarianism, tribalism, and nationalism. The binary opposition between the Gladstonian image of the "unspeakable Turk" and the romanticized image of "Ottoman cosmopolitanism" is one of the further fallacies of the historiography, resulting in a causality dilemma. On the one hand, nationalization is regarded as a reaction to "Oriental despotism" which is, on the other hand, depicted as a reaction to the sectarianism, tribalism, and nationalism that emerged in the "Mosaic model" of the Ottoman society. 102

Ottomanism is probably the most misunderstood corporate ideology in the intellectual histories of the Middle East. Most of the major studies in late Ottoman history "are devoted to the delineation of the failure of the Ottoman system as a prelude to the triumph of the modern state." 103 Obviously Ottomanism failed to incorporate the non-Muslims (especially Christians, more than Jews) and Muslims within a common civic identity. This, however, was not the same as the incorporation of Turkish and non-Turkish Muslims into a common Ottoman-Islamic identity. A strange but widely repeated idea holds that the shift from Ottoman-Islamic identity to national and secular Arab or Turkish identity happened overnight right after the Ottoman Empire found itself on the losing end of World War I. Awad Halabi recently showed that "Ottoman and Islamic loyalties persisted among both Turks and Arabs, making a sharp periodization [between the Ottoman and post-Ottoman eras] unsustainable." Basing his analysis on the Palestinian press during "the liminal years 1917-22," Halabi interprets the decline of Ottoman rule in the Arab provinces rather as "gradual processes, not [as] an abrupt break between Ottoman rule and colonial or nationalist regimes." ¹⁰⁴ Even in the National Pact of 1920 Turkish nationalists were still eagerly talking about the "Ottoman nation." Nuri al-Sa'id, who left the Ottoman army to

join the Arab Revolt, writes: "None of us thought of separation from the Ottoman Empire. Our thinking was directed toward obtaining a local Arab administration, the recognition of Arabic as an official language, and Turkish-Arab association in the administration of the general policy of the state." 106

The third dichotomy between nationalism and Islam suggests that these are incompatible and conflicting ideologies. On the one hand, this Orientalist argument derives from limiting Islam to its theoretical and normative teachings. 107 On the other hand, this view comes from the modernist perspective that regards nationalism as a natural product of secularism and liberalism against religious conservatism and atavism. The post-Ottoman nationalists inherited this Orientalist understanding of Islam and nationalism and were eager to construct their own secularist histories. 108 Thus the Turkish and Arab national movements during the Young Turk era are generally interpreted in the literature as strongly secular, so that their attitude toward Islam is mostly dismissed as opportunistic and superficial or even hostile. This is again a misleading generalization. 109 Zürcher, for instance, argues that within the political rhetoric of Young Turks (including the Kemalist movement in Anatolia) the major corporate identity motive was not Turkish ethnonationalism but rather Ottoman-Muslim nationalism.¹¹⁰ Kayalı also argues that under Young Turk rule "religion continued to be the primary focus of allegiance for the Muslim masses" and that therefore the existing Ottomanism as a state ideology was first Islamized by the Young Turks after the Balkan Wars. 111 After an analysis of major Young Turk periodicals, Masami Arai comes to a similar conclusion: "Contrary to the received wisdom, Turkish nationalists did not necessarily pursue secularization or Westernization; they were rather in favour of Islamization and Modernization. They searched for a means of regaining the original truth of Islam, and a way of modernization other than Westernization."112

Both the Arab and Turkish national movements were intellectual inheritors of the nineteenth-century Islamic reform movements led by the Young Ottoman intellectuals and other political activists like Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and his students. ¹¹³ Sir Gilbert Clayton of the Colonial Administration of Mesopotamia correctly concluded that for "the vast majority of [Arab] Moslems, Arab nationalism and Islamism are synonymous terms." ¹¹⁴

The political references to Islam were not necessarily meant as religious devoutness but rather as an essential part of political identity. The idea of pan-Islam was an integral element within the Middle Eastern

culture of nationalism, serving as a "proto-nationalism," as Nikki Keddie argues. 116 According to Zürcher, "their ideology was a cocktail of political, territorial, and religious elements, but one in which the Ottoman Muslim identity element predominated to such an extent that we can indeed speak of 'Muslim nationalism.'" 117 Cleveland argues from the Arab perspective that "appeals to Islamic solidarity and to the defence of the Islamic order against the West dominated the political discourse in the Eastern Arab World during the First World War" and "[t]hroughout the 1920s."118 Finally, in Gelvin's words: "The bonds of Islam thus came to exemplify, not contravene or replace, the bonds of nation." The discursive dichotomy between nationalism and Islam was also another pillar of the British officials' perception of the Middle Eastern uprisings: "Panislamism is...a potential danger.... The antidote is nationalism." ¹²⁰ Meanwhile the Middle Eastern insurgents apparently had another formula: "Be nationalist because it is the only way to save Islam.... Be loyal to Islam because it is the only way to save our national inheritance." 121

It is necessary to overcome these discursive dichotomies in order to understand the cultivation of Ottoman-Muslim nationalism in the Young Turk era. Historians need to acknowledge that not only Turkish and Arab nationalism but also Ottoman identity and Islam could and did coexist, overlap, and challenge as well as inspire each other at the same time. During the final weeks of the defense of Medina in December 1918, the commander of the Ottoman forces, Fahri Paşa responded to British officials requesting his surrender, revealing his multilayered identity: "I am a Mohammedan. I am an Osmanli. I am the son of Bayer Bay. I am a soldier." 122

THE KOMITADJI-STYLE ORGANIZATION OF POLITICAL ACTIVISM

The other feature of the Young Turk zeitgeist during the immediate postwar years was the increasingly komitadji nature of political activism among rising elites. The nonpolitical tradition of rural banditry (eşkiyacılık or çetecilik) by nomadic tribes, army deserters, and criminal gangs in the Ottoman periphery was adopted by the nationalist factions of Ottoman Christians in the second half of the nineteenth century and turned into a distinctive form of political contention, called komitacılık, which included secret societies of political conspiracy, guerrilla and terrorist tactics, and radical partisanship. The Young Turk army officers learned these underground and guerrilla tactics in the Balkans during

their fight against the Bulgarian and Macedonian komitadjis and consequently organized their opposition movement against Sultan Abdülhamid in the same fashion, resulting in the revolution of 1908. 123

The use of the komitadji repertoire of political contention opened up the way to politics for lower and middle classes and built up a new political class that endured even after the end of the empire and played a crucial role in the successor states. These Young Turk-like new political elites had some common features across the Middle East:

First, they owe their status to their training and modern skills, not to their wealth. Second, they are mostly, especially until quite recently, in government careers. Third, they are most likely the offspring of urban petite bourgeoisie or the rural middle class. The military in particular and to a lesser extent civilian bureaucracy provided a channel of upward mobility to the sons of such modest families. ¹²⁵

Beyond its original Mazzinian roots, the CUP itself became a party model in the Middle East. Secret societies were founded by Arab students, officers, and intellectuals. These Arab committees were directly inspired by or even sometimes initiated by the CUP. Therefore the Turkish and Arab organizations behind the Middle Eastern uprisings were similar or even connatural. The Young Arab Society (al-Fatat) was an organization very similar to CUP and fashioned after the Young Turk model. Arab and Turkish nationalists had an identical background. Both the CUP and famous Arab secret societies like al-Fatat and al-Yahd emerged as secret societies among the students and officers educated at the Ottoman academies. In his general survey on the origins of "Young" movements in Asia Mansura Haidar concludes: "The Young Turk movement proved to be a political catalyst which enthused and goaded the Asians to fight against colonialists." In his general survey on the origins of the Asians to fight against colonialists." In his general survey on the origins of "Young" movements in Asia Mansura Haidar concludes: "The Young Turk movement proved to be a political catalyst which enthused and goaded the Asians to fight against colonialists."

The komitadji spirit of political activism was also apparent in the sacralization of the party and state. Along with the revolution of 1908, the Young Turks introduced Jacobinism to Ottoman politics. 129 Not without a cause the CUP was called by its members "the sacred society" (*cemiyet-i mukaddese*). After the takeover of governmental power the esoteric-militant loyalty to the committee was translated into a strong statist mentality (*devletçilik*). After the demise of Ottoman rule the ulema and local elites in the Arab provinces continued to promote these "state-centric nationalist ideologies" of the Young Turk era to the masses. 131

The resistance and protest patterns used by Turkish and Arab insurgents during the aftermath period reveal also a similarity. The Middle Eastern uprisings were all carried out with the typical contentious repertoire of the Young Turk era. According to Khalidi, Arab nationalists adopted the public mobilization policies of the CUP in the postwar period: Street demonstrations, use of media, and military coups became instruments of drastic political change. The mobilization of popular masses was also a feature of the komitadji tradition of the Young Turk era. Gelvin argues that the demonstration culture in the late Ottoman Empire was adopted and transformed by the elites and popular masses in Syria in the aftermath of World War I.

Furthermore the relationship to the Bolsheviks and socialism in general needs to be seen within the revolutionary concept of komitadji. During the Baku Congress Şevket Süreyya (Aydemir), a promising young nationalist, was introduced to Enver Paşa, whose biography he would later write. According to Aydemir's impressions, Enver Paşa saw the Bolsheviks merely as a komitadji organization. "He believed," as Aydemir recalls, "that the Bolshevik Party came to power by a komitadji coup d'état like the secret Committee of Union and Progress did." Therefore the nature of the cooperation between Young Turks and Bolsheviks was based on the notion that "a komitadji knows a komitadji." 136

Last but not least, the most important komitadji legacy is paramilitary warfare. According to a British official, the movement "would foment insurrections resorting to the avowed tactics of guerilla and *cemitadji* [sic] warfare." Between 1914 and 1922 warfare was the "daily environment of the ordinary people" in Syria and elsewhere in the Arab East and in "their vision of the world." Provence has persuasively shown the impact of the modern Ottoman education institutions and the military experience in the Ottoman army on the identity construction of the postwar Arab leaders and insurgents. Accordingly, "[t]ens of thousands of colonial citizens" who "challenged the postwar settlement" were former Ottoman citizens or even Ottoman soldiers who were actually politically cultivated in the Hamidian and Young Turk eras. 139

ANTI-IMPERIAL MASS STRUGGLE AS JIHAD

As Hanioğlu writes, "anti-imperialism constituted one of the main pillars of the CUP ideology." European imperialism was perceived as a "modern crusade," so the anti-imperialist discourse of the Young Turk era had a correspondingly Islamic tone. ¹⁴⁰ The use of jihad in the anti-imperial struggle

was one of the most important features of the Young Turk zeitgeist among the popular masses. According to Provence, the emerging resistance to European occupiers was actually based on "familiar Ottoman ideas of religion, nation, and homeland. As practical ideologies of anti-imperialism, these identities had been nurtured in Ottoman military and civil schools and the military service between around 1880 and 1913."

Contrary to nationalist interpretations, the Middle Eastern insurgents of the aftermath period used a very strong Islamic rhetoric. The Islamization of political rhetoric was not an atavistic resistance to modern developments at the end of the Ottoman Empire or mere pragmatism to manipulate the masses but rather a discourse that complemented the general nationalist and anti-imperial struggle. 142 As Gelvin shows, the calls for jihad were very common in postwar Syria. People who had recently escaped the conscription of the Ottoman and Faysal governments were now freely participating in the jihad against the French occupation. 143 During the Iraqi revolt there were also calls for jihad by Shi'i mujtahidin. 144 Gertrude Bell wrote from Iraq to her father: "We are now in the middle of a full-blown Jihad." ¹⁴⁵ Mustafa Kemal himself often used the term "jihad" in his political statements. 146 Mustafa Kemal's newspaper, Hakimiyet-i Milliye, had the same anti-imperialist and pan-Islamic tone as Enver's Liwa-el-Islam. 147 The Kemalist newspaper argued that the Anatolian movement was part of the general struggle in Asia for freedom. 148 The chief of political affairs of the Foreign Ministry of the Ankara government, Yusuf Hikmet (Bayur) was not just bluffing but also considering a very possible political option, as he warned the Allies: "should western European governments refuse to abandon their imperialistic ambitions in our country, we should be obliged to fight imperialism with its own weapons. We would join hands with all the oppressed nationalities of Asia. At the head of millions of Asiatic warriors trained by us, we would lead the fight for the emancipation of all colonies." 149

The Bolshevists called upon the Muslim delegates of the Baku Congress to wage "a true people's holy war," targeted "above all against British Imperialism!" This demonstrates how appealing the jihad became in anti-imperialist struggle even for antireligious Communists. ¹⁵⁰ Anti-imperialism was therefore one of the ideological bridges between Islam and communism in the aftermath period. ¹⁵¹

I consider this call to jihad in the anti-imperialist mass struggle in the aftermath period to be a typical feature of the Young Turk zeitgeist connecting the different national, local, or tribal insurgencies to a single framework of Ottoman-Muslim resistance against the West. As a result of the secular perception of the CUP in the literature, their relation to pan-Islam has been continuously understated. Especially the jihad of 1914 has been repeatedly illustrated as a "Holy War Made in Germany," thus downplaying the role of the Young Turk government.¹⁵² Mustafa Aksakal has demonstrated a continued use of jihad in Ottoman politics long before World War I. 153 In the case of the Young Turks, the CUP and its irregular forces acting as Ottoman intelligence and special operations forces have continuously promoted pan-Islam and jihad since the Turkish-Italian War over Libya in 1911 in order to ensure the loyalty of the Ottoman-Muslim subjects and to mobilize Muslim insurgencies against the Christian enemies of the Ottoman Empire. 154 Even though the jihad of 1914 did not fulfill its promise, only with the aftermath period did a new jihad emerge as a transnational social movement of the anticolonial Muslim struggle. 155 In Halabi's words: "This pan-Islamic aspect combined with persistent Ottomanism and generic anti-imperialism to serve as another point of connection between the Turkish and Palestinian [also Syrian and Iraqi | causes during the early 1920s." 156

Not without reason the idea of pan-Islam became "the greatest single concern for British intelligence between 1919 and 1923." ¹⁵⁷ Consequently the main purpose of the peace settlement became the punishment and prevention of pan-Islamism. ¹⁵⁸

CONCLUSION: THE YOUNG TURK DISCOURSE IN HISTORY AND HISTORIOGRAPHY

In the aftermath period the Young Turk exiles ambitiously attempted and publicly announced efforts to unite the different Muslim and Middle Eastern uprisings against the British imperialism. A Unionist Factor in an operational sense, however, was not behind the uprisings of the Arab East. The discourse of the Unionist Factor, in the form of conspiracy theories, alarmed British decision makers and encouraged them to act more severely against everything that the Young Turks represented: Ottoman-Muslim nationalism, revolutionary activism, pan-Islamic anti-imperialism, and most of all transnational and transideological coalitions among revolutionaries in the Middle East. Although they failed terribly, the story of the Young Turks' exile activities delivers an alternative narrative of the prevailing zeitgeist of the Muslim and Middle Eastern uprisings in the aftermath of World War I. According to a contemporary British cabinet paper: "The C.U.P., in fact, have [sic] not given up the game. The war may lead to the opening of the Straits and the partition of

the Ottoman Empire. But it has immensely weakened the orderly forces of civilization, and loosened the hold of Europe over large areas of the Moslem world. There may still be room in this World for Enver."¹⁵⁹

Even though it did not lead to the formation of an effective transnational coalition between the Middle Eastern uprisings, intense negotiations and transactions were conducted between transnational agents of different movements. The transideological connections between allegedly conflicting groups blurred and confused the understanding of contemporary British observers, which made room for conspiracy theories. In order to hinder the growth of a transnational anticolonial movement of Ottoman Muslims, it was necessary to eliminate all the Ottoman-Islamic remnants that united the insurgents. Accordingly the British supported the isolation and nationalization of local movements. The Islamic transnationalism of the aftermath period was thus defeated by supporting local nationalism. For instance, Macfie argues that these intelligence reports on Enver's conspiratorial activities pushed the British policy makers to consider a rapprochement with Mustafa Kemal Paşa. 160 The imposition of the mandates and the enthronement of the Sharifian princes as their new rulers were further measures against pan-Islamism. 161 Peculiarly, those leaders of the postwar Middle East who were most touched by the Young Turk era themselves were also the ones who rejected this legacy with the most vigor. 162 To sum up the cultivation of Arab nationalists after the Young Turk model, Phebe Marr offers a remarkable observation:

All evidence suggests that...the seeds of [Arab] nationalism had as yet put down no deep roots among a population still wedded to tribe, clan, family, and above all religion. Even among those committed to Arab nationalist goals, Ottoman values and ideals remained strong. Four centuries of Ottoman tradition had left their mark. The new generation of Iraqis, no matter how vociferously they might denounce the Young Turks, resembled nothing so much as an Arab version of the Young Turks themselves. ¹⁶³

Edmund Burke suggests that when it comes to historicizing the past "orientalism and nationalism are deeply interconnected." The formation of Middle Eastern nation-states in 1922 set the blueprint for the colonial and nationalist history writing of the twentieth century. The legacy of the Young Turk conspiracy theory, developed by British officials, "continues to resurface in altered form in scholarly and semi-scholarly monographs of uneven quality dealing with the Young Turk period." ¹⁶⁵

The prevalent historiography is still having difficulties in interpreting the Turkish-Arab relations, particularly in the immediate postwar years, and the ideological opacity of the Young Turk era in the Middle East in general. The simplification of the ideological opacity of the Young Turk zeitgeist to political opportunism is merely another attempt to defend the devious dominance of ethnonationalism as a social force. The ideological eclecticism among Ottoman Muslims had its own viability and should not be measured or judged by other standards.

The preoccupation with ethnonationalism is the link between the contemporary British Intelligence reports and the prevailing literature on the Young Turk era. According to Audeh, this confusion

explains the literature's tendency to assert a strong correlation between ethnicity and Oriental political behavior; that is the raciallyspecific component of Oriental political movements is commonly regarded as more significant than the ideological messages these movements espouse. Thus for example, the formal, ostensible differences between Arab nationalism, Egyptian nationalism, Persian nationalism, etc. are considered much more meaningful than the underlying [anti-imperialist] similarities they share.... This was obviously the case in England's attitude towards Young Turk nationalism as well. Because of its theoretical and conceptual constitutive elements, there is a structural tendency in the Literature to systematically recreate the Young Turk period as a peculiar and aberrational interim...during which a cabal of unreasonable Turkish adventurers, ethnically and sociologically unrepresentative of the Ottoman body politic, managed to subvert the "normal," if unequal, relationship [with the West generally and the British Empire in particular. 166

Neither the hidden hand theory nor the grand narratives of distinct nationalist movements explain the Middle Eastern uprisings between 1918 and 1922. The different local insurgents shared cross-border Ottoman-Islamic solidarity, mutual inspiration as revolutionaries, and zeal to fight the colonial occupation. The interpretation of one of the experts of the German Auswärtiges Amt was more down to earth than that of his British colleagues:

The evidence that the mandatory powers have an interest in spreading the belief that there is a Bolshevik infection of their

Oriental people does not entitle one in any way to believe that every connection is invented. It is rather worthwhile to pick out the grains of truth that, as already hinted at, are hidden in the husks of the false evidence. In one point the enacted concerns displayed by the Entente are actually real and correct, despite all the fantasy in the particular details: that there is a logical connection between incidences that are spatial disparate, such as in Egypt and in India. The concept of a Bolshevik origin is merely a very transparent veil, with which the controlling powers of the Entente attempt to enshroud the eyes of the "profanum vulgus" from their own realization that there is an awakening sense of solidarity in the Islamic Orient. ¹⁶⁷

A certain form of transnational social movement was emerging among the Muslim rebels, which was characterized by a common political culture that I call in this chapter the Young Turk zeitgeist. A further and more extensive study of the postwar Muslim uprisings—beyond the Ottoman realms in North Africa, Egypt, Iran, India, and Turkestan—is still necessary to establish an even broader understanding of this very special period without reproducing teleological and partisan interpretations. The postwar Middle Eastern and Muslim uprisings resemble a "global movement" of anticolonial Muslim nationalism within the "global moment" of the aftermath of World War I. 168 Coming back to Provence's initial argument, we should not see these uprisings "as separate movements of national liberation but rather as locally conditioned elements of a single, undifferentiated struggle." The Italian Orientalist Leone Caetani similarly noted in 1919:

The convulsion [about the partition of the Ottoman Empire] has shaken the Islamic and Oriental civilization to its foundations. The entire Oriental world, from China to the Mediterranean, is in ferment. Everywhere the hidden fire of anti-European hatred is burning. Riots in Morocco, risings in Algiers, discontent in Tripoli, so-called Nationalist attempts in Egypt, Arabia, and Libya are all different manifestations of the same deep sentiment and have as their object the rebellion of the Oriental world against European civilization.¹⁷⁰

This chapter demonstrates the necessity of a turn in historiography toward transnational, entangled, and comparative approaches to the aftermath period in the Middle East. Some well-established discursive dichotomies in the historiography as well as methodological nationalism still hinder the explanation of the political contention culture of late and post-Ottoman insurgents. The formation process of new nation-states needs to be seen in connection with the intellectual and political currents of the Young Turk zeitgeist. The dynamics of this period are essential, not only because of the formation of the modern Middle Eastern states but also because of its lost battles and forgotten dreams.

NOTES

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- 1. Quoted in Norman Davies, White Eagle, Red Star, 21.
- For a general survey of the armed conflicts in the aftermath of World War I, see Peter Gatrell, "War after War."
- 3. David Fromkin, A Peace to End All Peace, 9.
- For the role of the CUP during the Turkish national struggle, see Erik J. Zürcher, The Unionist Factor, 68–105; Nur B. Criss, Istanbul under Allied Occupation, 1918– 1923, 94–114.
- 5. Eliezer Tauber, *The Formation of Modern Syria and Iraq*, 11–48.
- 6. Karen Barkey, "Thinking about Consequences of Empire," 104.
- 7. The late historian Sydney N. Fisher is said to have concluded that "from the European point of view, the question of what was to be done with the 'sick man of Europea,' had been fully answered by Anderson and others. This portion of European diplomatic history could be laid to rest." Quoted in William W. Haddad, "Nationalism in the Ottoman Empire," 3. For a detailed assessment of the historiography of the emergence of modern states in the Arab East, see Charles D. Smith, "The Historiography of World War I and the Emergence of the Contemporary Middle East." For the formation on new Muslim republics in the aftermath of World War I, see Stefan Reichmuth, "Der Erste Weltkrieg und die muslimischen Republiken der Nachkriegszeit."
- 8. Michael Provence, "Ottoman Modernity, Colonialism, and Insurgency in the Interwar Arab East," 206. I am grateful to Professor Michael Provence (University of California, San Diego) for his generous and kind comments.
- 9. Charles Tilly and Sidney G. Tarrow, Contentious Politics, 4, 22.
- Eyre Crowe, Minute to Foreign Office, November 18, 1918, Great Britain, National Archives (formerly Public Record Office), Foreign Office Papers, London (hereafter FO) 371.4369.513, quoted in John Fisher, "British Responses to Mahdist and

- Other Unrest in North and West Africa, 1919–1930," 348; and also in John Ferris, "The British Empire vs. the Hidden Hand," 337.
- 11. In *The Unionist Factor* Zürcher first showed the place of Mustafa Kemal within the CUP and the continued role of the CUP in Turkish politics after 1918 until the political purges of 1926. Zürcher introduced his new periodization in "The Ottoman Legacy of the Turkish Republic." This new periodization (the extension of the so-called Young Turk era from 1908 to 1950) was the most significant argument of his college textbook *Turkey: A Modern History*. For a collected edition of his articles on the Young Turk legacy in Turkey, see *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building*.
- 12. In my understanding, Young Turks (Jön Türkler, from French Jeunes-Turcs) is a synonym for Unionists (İttihatcılar, the members of the CUP). The second meaning of the term "Young Turks" implies the whole nationalist-progressive generation of military and civil elites of the late Ottoman and early Republican eras. See Erik J. Zürcher, "Who Were the Young Turks?" 95. According to *Webster's* dictionary, a third and broader meaning refers to "an insurgent in a political party, especially one belonging to a group or faction that supports liberal or progressive policies." This usage of the term "Young Turk" as a political activism model in the Mazzinian tradition inspired similar nationalist-progressive movements in the Islamic world, such as Young Arabs, Young Tunisians, Young Bukharans, and Young Afghans.
- Provence, "Ottoman Modernity, Colonialism, and Insurgency in the Interwar Arab East," 207.
- 14. This corresponds to what James L. Gelvin calls a "culture of nationalism": "There is a difference between a 'culture of nationalism' and the nationalist movements that spawn in that culture. 'Culture of nationalism' refers to a social imaginary inhabited by populations who view the assumptions associated with nationalism as self-evident and part of the natural order.... A culture of nationalism spread among the populations of the Middle East, as it spread among populations elsewhere, through their engagement in common practices associated with modern states and through their internalization of the organizational rationale underlying those practices.... Nationalist movements are distinct political movements that draw from the assumptions of nationalism and thrive in an environment in which a culture of nationalism has taken root. Although the diffusion of a culture of nationalism is an epochal event in the history of a region, nationalist movements are ephemeral phenomena": James L. Gelvin, "'Arab Nationalism': Has a New Framework Emerged?"
- 15. I am grateful to Professor Reinkowski for calling my attention to this problem.
- 16. Şerif Mardin, Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri, 2.
- 17. I borrowed this term from Ben Fowkes and Bülent Gökay, "Unholy Alliance."
- 18. N.N.E. Bray, "Preliminary Report on Causes of Unrest in Mesopotamia, September 1920," FO.371.5230.E12339. Also available at Great Britain, National Archives (formerly Public Record Office), Cabinet Papers, London (hereafter CAB), under the catalog reference CAB/24/112. See also N.N.E. Bray, "Causes of the Unrest in Mesopotamia—Report No. II, September 1920," FO.371.5231.7765; and "An Examination of the Cause of the Outbreak in Mesopotamia, with an Indication of Some of the Main Factors Underlying the Disturbed State of the Whole Middle East, October 1920," War Office (WO) 33.969. For a brief summary of these

reports, see "Notes Presented to Earl Curzon on Relations between Bolsheviks and Turkish Nationalists, November 20, 1920," FO.371.51.78.E.14638, in Bilâl N. Şimşir, ed., *British Documents on Atatürk (1919–1938), Vol. 2: April–December 1920*, 410–13. For a detailed analysis and evaluation of these reports, see Alec L. Macfie, "British Intelligence and the Causes of Unrest in Mesopotamia, 1919–21," 165. On the role and impact of Major Bray's reports, see John Fisher, "Major Norman Bray and Eastern Unrest in the British Empire in the Aftermath of World War I." For a harsh dismissal of Bray's reports as "nonsense," see Eliezer Tauber, "Syrian and Iraqi Nationalist Attitudes to the Kemalist and Bolshevik Movements," 909–12. For a more nuanced critique of these intelligence reports as "fairly accurate, reasonable even when wrong," see John Ferris, "'The Internationalism of Islam," 66; and idem, "The British Empire vs. the Hidden Hand," 326. For a cultural analysis of conspiratorial thinking in the reports of Bray and others, see Priya Satia, *Spies in Arabia*, 201–37.

- Commander Heathcote-Smith, "Report (Constantinople) on the Activities of the National Defence Organization, July 24, 1919," FO.371.4158.118411, in Bilâl N. Şimşir, ed., British Documents on Atatürk (1919–1938), Vol. 1: April–March 1920, 61.
- N.N.E. Bray, "Turco-Bolshevik Activities: Note by Political Intelligence Officer Attached to India Office, December 10, 1920," IO.L.P&S.18.B360, British Library, cited in Fisher, "Major Norman Bray," 51, 47.
- 21. Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace*, 41–43; Satia, *Spies in Arabia*, 204. Gerald Fitzmaurice, the chief dragoman of the British Embassy at the Ottoman capital, was the most influential promoter of the Young Turk conspiracy theory of 1908: see Geoff Berridge, *Gerald Fitzmaurice* (1865–1939).
- 22. This British conspiracy theory of interpreting the Young Turk Revolution as a Jewish-Freemason plot was later reanimated by Islamicizing-revisionist historians from Middle Eastern countries working with British archival material. See Maurus Reinkowski, "Late Ottoman Rule over Palestine," 69–72, 74–75.
- 23. Robert Irwin, "An Orientalist Mythology of Secret Societies," 80.
- 24. D.G. Osbourne, Minute, September 23, 1920, FO.371.4946.E11702, quoted in Ferris, "The British Empire vs. the Hidden Hand," 342.
- 25. Fromkin, A Peace to End All Peace, 461.
- 26. Bray, "Preliminary Report on Causes of Unrest in Mesopotamia," 3; Satia, Spies in Arabia, 205–6 (quotations). Satia also provides more examples of such observations of "unity of purpose and lack of dissensions" and the existence of "some controlling personality behind the movement" made by British Intelligence officials on the spot.
- 27. Bray, "Preliminary Report on Causes of Unrest in Mesopotamia," 4.
- 28. Compare Cavid Bey's diary entry from October 23, 1919: Cavid Bey, Felaket Günleri, 1:253; Talat Paşa, letter (Berlin), November 21, 1919, to Cavid Bey (Switzerland), in Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın and Osman S. Kocahanoğlu, eds., İttihatçı Liderlerin Gizli Mektupları, 144–45. Peculiarly, there is no entry in Cavid's diary between November 12 and 22. It seems to have been the talk of the town by then that Talat was in Switzerland. According to Cavid's diary (November 10, 1919), Tribune de Genève reported that Talat arrived in Switzerland with a fake passport and was trying to establish the new Young Turk headquarters in Zurich. Cavid Bey, Felaket Günleri, 1:258.

- 29. Cavid Bey mentions in a diary entry on December 24, 1919, that he received a telegram from Talat Paşa, who was by then in St. Moritz. Ibid., 276. Cemal Paşa was also in Switzerland by then, which indicates an important meeting.
- Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts/Archive of the German Foreign Ministry, Berlin (hereafter PAAA), Deutsche Gesandtschaft Bern, Zusammenkunft jungtürkischer Führer in der Schweiz, January 14, 1920, PAAA R 14162.
- 31. For a declaration of solidarity and alliance with the Turkish national movement by Syrian nationalists, see M. Metin Hülagü, İslam Birliği ve Mustafa Kemal, 81. The earliest approach by Arab nationalists was in November 1918, during the armistice negotiations of Mudros between Ali Fuad (Cebesoy) and Nuri al-Sacid. Fuad Paşa, however, dismissed it as a British intrigue. Ali Fuad Cebesoy, Milli Mücadele Hatıraları, 84–85. See also Sina Akşin, "Turkish-Syrian Relations in the Time of Faysal (1918–20)," 3.
- 32. Naramoto goes even further and argues that these uprisings in Dayr al-Zor and Cilicia were communicated and even coordinated between Mustafa Kemal Paşa and Arab nationalists: Eisuke Naramoto, "An Introductory Note on Military Alliance between the Arab and Turkish Nationalists, 1919–1920." See also Elie Kedourie, England and the Middle East, 170–72; Zeine Zeine, The Struggle for Arab Independence, 133–36. Even though Tauber rejects the notion of cooperation, he documents vast contacts between Turkish and Arab nationalists: Tauber, "Syrian and Iraqi Nationalist Attitudes to the Kemalist and Bolshevik Movements," 898–907. But all these scholars also rely very much on British archival documents.
- 33. Naramoto, "An Introductory Note on Military Alliance between the Arab and Turkish Nationalists," 219; Hülagü, İslam Birliği ve Mustafa Kemal, 73–81.
- 34. Zeine, *The Struggle for Arab Independence*, 134. For British suspicions that "Feisal's natural instinct is pro-Turk," see Isaiah Friedman, *British Miscalculations*, 57.
- 35. Zeine, The Struggle for Arab Independence, 135-36.
- 36. Dalal Arsuzi-Elamir, "The Uprisings in Antakya 1918–1926," 590. According to Khoury: "In fact, the northern Syrian resistance was far more influenced by the Turkish nationalist movement than it was by the Arab nationalist movement.... Within the semicircle of the northern Syrian revolt originated and an alliance developed with the Kemalist movement": Philip S. Khoury, Syria and the French Mandate, 105. Similarly, Mosul for similar reasons was also more closely associated with the Anatolian movement than with Baghdad. Friedman, British Miscalculations, 163.
- 37. Fisher, "Major Norman Bray," 49.
- 38. Quoted from the English translation by Ared Misirliyan in Martin S. Kramer, Islam Assembled, 175–77. For the Turkish version, see Kazım Karabekir, İstiklâl Harbimizde Enver Paşa ve İttihat-Terakki Erkânı, 103–4; Zafer Toprak, "İslam İhtilal Cemiyetleri İttihadı (İttihad-1 Selamet-i İslam) ve Panislamizm," 179–81.
- 39. Enver Paşa, letter (Berlin) [December 1919] to Cemal Paşa (Munich) in Yalçın and Kocahanoğlu, eds., İttihatçı Liderlerin Gizli Mektupları, 34. This is the outline of the first arrangement between Enver and Talat and their Bolshevik partner in Berlin, Karl Radek. See also Edward H. Carr, "Radek's 'Political Salon' in Berlin 1919," 419–20.

- 40. Yamauchi relies on the same British Intelligence reports as Major Bray and documents these meetings in Switzerland in which Amir Shakib Arslan "played the important role of transmitting messages from Faysal to Talat": Masayuki Yamauchi, ed., The Green Crescent under the Red Star, 20.
- 41. Talat Paşa, letter (Berlin), December 22, 1919, to Mustafa Kemal Paşa (Ankara), in Yalçın and Kocahanoğlu, İttihatçı Liderlerin Gizli Mektupları, 205–6.
- 42. Bray, "Preliminary Report on Causes of Unrest in Mesopotamia," 4–5. For Shakib Arslan's letter, see India Office, "Intelligence Report (Switzerland) to Foreign Office concerning the Alleged Intrigues of Faisul with the Bolsheviks," February 10, 1920, FO.371.5032.E-21.2.44, quoted in Zeine, *The Struggle for Arab Independence*, 134–35.
- 43. Macfie, "British Intelligence and the Causes of Unrest in Mesopotamia," 172.
- 44. Ferris, "The Internationalism of Islam," 67. For a report that demonstrates how well informed British Intelligence was on Enver Paşa's activities in June 1922, see "A Report by the British Secret Intelligence Service, Constantinople Branch," June 22, 1922, FO.371.7947.E.6421, in Bilâl N. Şimşir, ed., British Documents on Atatürk (1919–1938), Vol. 4: October 1921–October 1922, 281–87.
- 45. Ferris, "The British Empire vs. the Hidden Hand," 329.
- Mushir H. Kidwai, The Sword against Islam. See also Syed Tanvir Wasti, "Mushir Hosain Kidwai and the Ottoman Cause," 257–59.
- 47. George Kidston, minute, October 24, 1919, FO.371.4233.141286, quoted in Fisher, "Major Norman Bray," 45.
- 48. Alp Yenen, "The Exile Activities of the Unionists in Berlin (1918–1922)."
- 49. On Enver's activities in Moscow, see Louise Bryant, Mirrors of Moscow, 149-63.
- 50. For the relationship of the exiled Unionists with Mustafa Kemal Paşa, see Selim İlkin and İlhan Tekeli, "Kurtuluş Savaşında Talat Paşa ile Mustafa Kemal'in Mektuplaşması"; Salahi R. Sonyel, "Mustafa Kemal and Enver in Conflict, 1919–22"; Saime Yüceer, "Enver Paşa'nın Anadolu'da İktidarı Ele Geçirme Çabaları."
- 51. Apparently Talat Paşa was in touch with Mohammed Ali from the Indian Khilafat Movement. Talat Paşa, letter (Berlin) [August 1920] to Cavid Bey (Switzerland), in Yalçın and Kocahanoğlu, İttihatçı Liderlerin Gizli Mektupları, 161–62; Enver Paşa, letter (Moscow), August 26, 1920, to Mustafa Kemal Paşa (Ankara), in ibid., 43–47. See also M. Naeem Qureshi, Pan-Islam in British Indian Politics, 221–23.
- 52. Aubrey Herbert, Ben Kendim, 326.
- 53. Kramer, Islam Assembled, 71. The most prominents were Dr. Ahmad Fu'ad Bey and Sheikh 'Abd al-'Aziz Shavish (in Turkish: Çaviş) Efendi from Egypt. They both were agents of the Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa during World War I.
- 54. Ferris, "The British Empire vs. the Hidden Hand," 334.
- 55. Zürcher, The Unionist Factor, 168.
- 56. Fromkin, A Peace to End All Peace, 461; Satia, Spies in Arabia, 203.
- 57. Quoted in Satia, Spies in Arabia, 206.
- 58 Ibid
- 59. George Kidston from Foreign Office, quoted in ibid., 224.
- 60. Ferris, "The British Empire vs. the Hidden Hand," 329.
- 61. "Germans Inspire New Plot in East," New York Times, July 3, 1919.
- 62. Satia, Spies in Arabia, 211.

- Secret Intelligence Service (SIS) chief in Constantinople, "Political Report," May 5, 1920, FO.371.5178.E.4689, quoted in Ferris, "'The Internationalism of Islam," 65.
- 64. Malcolm Yapp, The Making of the Modern Near East, 316.
- T.E. Lawrence, "Note," September 20, 1919, FO.371.4236.129405, quoted in Satia, Spies in Arabia, 212.
- 66. British General Headquarters (Constantinople), "Telegram to War Office," September 23, 1919, FO.371.4233.136149, in Şimsir, *British Documents on Atatürk* (1919–1938), Vol. 1, 121.
- 67. Ferris, "'The Internationalism of Islam," 66.
- See, for instance, Military Intelligence, Constantinople branch, "Weekly Summary
 of Intelligence Reports for Week Ending 21st November 1919," November 21, 1919,
 FO.371.4161.161851, in Şimsir, British Documents on Atatürk (1919–1938), Vol. 1, 248.
- 69. The question of whether Mustafa Kemal and Enver were working together has long stuck in the heads of British Intelligence officers. For example, Captain J. S. Perring stationed in Samsun reported: "I beg to express the opinion that the whole movement originates with Enver Pasha, whose presence in the Caucasus there can be very little doubt of, and his appearance at the head of the present organization is openly talked of": J. S. Perring, "Report (Samsun) to Vice-Admiral Sir D. de Robeck (Constantinople)," October 1, 1919, FO.406.41, 292, No. 139-1, in ibid., 159. Meanwhile his superior officer, Admiral Richard Webb, had his doubts: "I do not agree with his opinion, as expressed in paragraph 2, as to the movement originating with Enver; other reports rather go to show that Mustafa Kemal has no dealings with him whatever": Richard Webb, "Report (Constantinople) to Earl Curzon," October 18, 1919, FO.406.41, 291-92, No. 139, in ibid., 158.
- 70. United States Radio Press, "Nationalist Party in Turkey," October 15, 1919, FO.406.41, 299, No. 140-5, in ibid., 170-71.
- 71. Nabeel Audeh, "The Ideological Uses of History and the Young Turks as a Problem for Historical Interpretation," 2-3.
- 72. Ibid., 3-4.
- 73. The best collection of articles by leading scholars on the Ottoman legacy in the Middle East and the Balkans is Carl L. Brown, ed., *Imperial Legacy*. For the Ottoman impact in the Middle East from a more historical perspective, see Albert Hourani, "The Ottoman Background of the Modern Middle East."
- 74. Provence, "Ottoman Modernity, Colonialism, and Insurgency in the Interwar Arab East."
- 75. Of course Webb refers here to the Unionist Factor in the Anatolian resistance movement. For the sake of generalization I have left out his references to Turkish nationalists: Richard Webb, "Report (Constantinople) to Earl Curzon," October 10, 1919, FO.406.41, 251–56, No. 126, in Şimsir, *British Documents on Atatürk* (1919–1938), Vol. 1, 141.
- Erik J. Zürcher, "Young Turks, Ottoman Muslims and Turkish Nationalists: Identity Politics, 1908–1938," in *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building*, 213–35.
- James L. Gelvin, *Divided Loyalties*, 220; Fred Halliday, "The Formation of Yemeni Nationalism," 26; Zürcher, "Young Turks, Ottoman Muslims and Turkish Nationalists," 214–17.

- Yusuf Akçura, Üç Tarz-ı Siyaset. For a critical rereading of Akçura, see M. Hakan Yavuz, "Nationalism and Islam." See also Zürcher, "Young Turks, Ottoman Muslims and Turkish Nationalists," 215.
- 79. M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, 296, 298. See also Feroz Ahmad, *The Young Turks*, 155; Hans-Lukas Kieser, *Vorkämpfer der "Neuen Türkei*," 73.
- 80. Ulrich Beck and Natan Sznaider, "Unpacking Cosmopolitanism for the Social Sciences," 3–4. An alternate definition is delivered by Chernilo, who differentiates between a theoretical and historical version of methodological nationalism: Daniel Chernilo, "The Critique of Methodological Nationalism," 104–5.
- 81. A fourth dichotomy in the literature is the incompatibility of Islam and socialism. The attraction of Muslim insurgents to socialism was based mostly on populist, revolutionary, and anti-imperial sentiments and socialism was not necessarily a strong corporate identity among the Middle Eastern elites and masses, so this question needs to be dealt elsewhere.
- 82. M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, "Turkish Nationalism and the Young Turks, 1889–1908"; idem, "Turkism and the Young Turks, 1889–1908"; David Kushner, *The Rise of Turkish Nationalism*, 1876–1908.
- 83. Feroz Ahmad, "Review of *The Young Turks in Opposition* by M. Sükrü Hanioğlu," 1589. See also the discussion between Hanioğlu and Ahmad in *American Historical Review* 102, no. 4 (1997): 1301–3. But the discussion is less productive because both experts prefer to discuss terminological interpretations of nation and nationalism in Ottoman Turkish instead of historiographical interpretations of Turkish nationalism.
- 84. Kushner's conclusion is cautious but not without consequences: "The nationalism of the early Turkists was largely cultural. Nowhere in their writings was there a challenge to Ottomanism and Islamism, the official doctrines of the [Hamidian] state. On the contrary, they were all too often eager to note their adherence to these doctrines.... The decade of the Young Turk rule only intensified the processes which were leading the Turks toward political nationalism.... These pressures both at the periphery and at the center itself could not but increase the sense of isolation and unity of the Turks and accelerated their conversion to Turkish nationalism": The Rise of Turkish Nationalism, 98. Similarly, Hanioğlu relativizes the early rise of Turkism in connection to the continuing adherence of the Young Turks to Ottomanism: "Turkism rose to prominence much earlier than is usually assumed, while Ottomanism persisted much later than is commonly held": Hanioğlu, "Turkism and the Young Turks," 19.
- See Hans-Lukas Kieser's "Introduction" in his edited volume *Turkey beyond Nationalism*, vii–xvii.
- 86. For an exemplary survey of pan-Turkism in the Young Turk era, see Jacob M. Landau, *Pan-Turkism in Turkey*, 28–71. Reynolds argues that pan-Turkism is overestimated in scholarly works, only because it serves teleological and political functions: Michael A. Reynolds, "Buffers, Not Brethren." Elsewhere Reynolds showed that pan-Turkism did not affect the Young Turk policies toward the Turkic populated regions of Caucasia, Crimea, and Central Asia: Michael A. Reynolds, *Shattering Empires*.
- 87. Erol Ülker, "Contextualising 'Turkification," 613–36.

- 88. George Antonius, *The Arab Awakening*. See also Albert Hourani, "The Arab Awakening Forty Years After"; Martin S. Kramer, "Ambition's Discontent"; William L. Cleveland, "The Arab Nationalism of George Antonius Reconsidered."
- 89. The revolt was supported only by a minority of the Arabs, such as local chieftains with their own kingdom ambitions, well-paid Bedouin tribes without any national sentiments, and a few idealist and nationalist officers from the Ottoman army. Efraim Karsh and Inari Karsh, "Myth in the Desert, or Not the Great Arab Revolt."
- 90. Philip S. Khoury, *Urban Notables and Arab Nationalism*, 74; C. Ernest Dawn, "The Origins of Arab Nationalism," 10; Sylvia Kedourie, ed., *Arab Nationalism*, 35.
- 91. Zeine Zeine, *The Emergence of Arab Nationalism*, 83; Hisham Sharabi, *Arab Intellectuals and the West*, 107; Rashid Khalidi, "Ottomanism and Arabism in Syria before 1914," 53–54; Mahmoud Haddad, "The Rise of Arab Nationalism Reconsidered," 213; Khoury, *Urban Notables and Arab Nationalism*, 58.
- 92. Rashid Khalidi in particular champions this "revision of the revisionist thesis" in order to build leverage against the Zionist narratives claiming that the Arabs lacked any sentiment for statehood and nationalism. Khalidi claims that the majority of Ottoman Arabs already were adherents of Arabism in 1914, while at the same time admitting that they might not have had separatist tendencies in regard to the Ottoman Empire: Rashid Khalidi, "Ottomanism and Arabism in Syria before 1914," 62.
- M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, "The Young Turks and the Arabs before the Revolution of 1908," 31.
- 94. For Ottoman historians rejecting the argument of Turkification of the Arab provinces, see Hasan Kayalı, *Arabs and Young Turks*, 20–11; Zafer Toprak, "Bir Hayal Ürünü," 14–22; Ülker, "Contextualising 'Turkification,'" 623. The distinguished Arab historian C. Ernest Dawn also dismisses the Turkification argument because it is based on strongly biased sources like the British diplomatic documents or the few dissident Arab newspapers. Instead he interprets the emergence of Arabism as a result of intra-Arab conflict over governmental positions after the war: Dawn, "The Origins of Arab Nationalism," 11–12.
- 95. Kayalı, Arabs and Young Turks, 210.
- 96. For the Turkish-Arab animosity in history and historiography, see Ulrich W. Haarmann, "Ideology and History, Identity and Alterity."
- 97. Audeh, "The Ideological Uses of History and the Young Turks," 622-24.
- 98. Quoted in Zeine, The Struggle for Arab Independence, 136.
- 99. Reynolds, *Shattering Empires*, 3.
- 100. William L. Cleveland, Islam against the West, 24.
- 101. Hanioğlu, "Turkism and the Young Turks," 4.
- 102. Audeh, "The Ideological Uses of History and the Young Turks," 550-51.
- 103. Rifaat A. Abou-el-Haj, "The Social Uses of the Past," 189. Here Abou-el-Haj refers to seminal works like Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*; and Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*.
- 104. Awad Halabi, "Liminal Loyalties," 19-20.
- 105. Roderic H. Davison, "Nationalism as an Ottoman Problem and the Ottoman Response," 52.

- 106. Quoted in William W. Haddad, "Nationalism in the Ottoman Empire," 19.
- 107. For example, P.J. Vatikiotis writes: "Islam and nationalism are mutually exclusive terms. As a constructive loyalty to territorially defined national group, nationalism has been incompatible with Islam in which the state is not ethnically or territorially defined, but is itself ideological and religious": Panayiotis J. Vatikiotis, *Islam and the State*, 42–43.
- 108. Edmund Burke III, "Orientalism and World History," 495.
- 109. Of course we cannot ignore the impact of positivism and scientism on the Young Turk intellectual world, which become most evident in the early Republican era: M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, *Atatürk*, 48–67.
- 110. Erik J. Zürcher, "The Vocabulary of Muslim Nationalism"; idem, "Young Turks, Ottoman Muslims and Turkish Nationalists." Gotthard Jaeschke was the first scholar to appreciate the role of religion during the Turkish national movement: Gotthard Jaeschke, "Nationalismus und Religion im Türkischen Befreiungskriege." For other authors giving religion a major role within the rise of Turkish nationalism, see Yavuz, "Nationalism and Islam"; and Elisabeth Özdalga, "Islamism and Nationalism as Sister Ideologies."
- 111. Kayalı, Arabs and Young Turks, 211.
- 112. Masami Arai, Turkish Nationalism in the Young Turk Era, 97.
- 113. The intellectual impact of the Young Ottoman movement on Young Turk political culture is unquestioned, whereas the impact of the Islamic reform movement on the emergence of Arab nationalism was disputed among scholars of Arab intellectual history. While some scholars rejected this Islamic input by underlining the role played by Arab Christians and Western-educated secular Arabs, other scholars dismiss these as politically marginal and detached from the masses. These scholars address the decisive role of Islamic Arab reformers and activists, such as Muhammad 'Abduh, Muhammad Rashid Rida, 'Abd al-Rahman al-Kawakibi, and others in the development of Arabism as a political movement.
- 114. Quoted in Friedman, British Miscalculations, 49.
- 115. Zürcher, "Young Turks, Ottoman Muslims and Turkish Nationalists," 230–31.
- 116. Nikki R. Keddie, "Pan-Islam as Proto-Nationalism," 26-27.
- 117. Of course Zürcher speaks here only about Turkish nationalists during the Young Turk era, including the postwar Anatolian resistance: Zürcher, "The Vocabulary of Muslim Nationalism," 90. For an official statement of Mustafa Kemal referring to the Muslim nation regardless of ethnicity, see Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, "Türk Milletini Teşkil Eden Müslüman Öğeler Hakkında," May 1, 1920, in Nimet Arsan, ed., *Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri*, 73–74.
- William L. Cleveland, "The Role of Islam as Political Ideology in the First World War," 85.
- 119. James L. Gelvin, "Modernity and Its Discontents," 83.
- 120. A minute by Arthur Hirtzel, August 8, 1919, quoted in Ferris, "The British Empire vs. the Hidden Hand," 340.
- Memorandum by Mr. Ryan, December 25, 1919, quoted in Friedman, British Miscalculations, 88–89.
- 122. Reginald Wingate, letter to Lynden-Bell, February 20, 1919, FO 371/4166, 81504/740, quoted in Elie Kedourie, "The Surrender of Medina, January 1919," 132.

- 123. Here I refer to the second generation of Young Turks, mostly low-rank officers and clerks from Thrace, Albania, and Macedonia. Suavi Aydın, "İki İttihat-Terakki," 124.
- 124. Keith David Watenpaugh, Being Modern in the Middle East, 160–184.
- 125. Ergun Özbudun, "The Continuing Ottoman Legacy and the State Tradition in the Middle East," 146.
- 126. On the efforts of the Young Turks to establish Young Turk clubs for the Arabs in Libya, see Rachel Simon, "Mustafa Kemal in Libya," 20–21.
- 127. Haddad, "The Rise of Arab Nationalism Reconsidered," 205.
- 128. Mansura Haidar, "The Origin, Genesis and Regional Chain Reaction of the 'Young' Movement," 52. Most of the Arab nationalist associations during the aftermath period were called "Young": Gelvin, *Divided Loyalties*, 200.
- 129. Feroz Ahmad, "War and Society under the Young Turks, 1908–1918" (2003), 129.
- 130. As Paul Dumont noted, statism "has two separate but related meanings. In a general way, it refers to strategy of state intervention in all social, economic, cultural and educational activities.... In a more limited sense, the term indicates a specific economic policy." In this chapter I refer to its first and general meaning, which "implies a paternalistic approach in which the state has responsibility for organizing the life of the nation and finding solutions to all its problems": Paul Dumont, "The Origins of Kemalist Ideology," 39. See also Özbudun, "The Continuing Ottoman Legacy and the State Tradition in the Middle East," 137.
- 131. Gelvin, "Modernity and Its Discontents," 79-80.
- 132. "Contentious repertoires are arrays of contentious performances that are currently known and available within some set of political actors": Tilly and Tarrow, Contentious Politics, 11.
- 133. Khalidi, "Ottomanism and Arabism in Syria before 1914," 65.
- 134. For the Young Turks' public mobilization politics, see Ahmad, "War and Society under the Young Turks, 1908–1918" (2003), 127–31.
- 135. Gelvin, *Divided Loyalties*, 260–63. See also idem, "The Social Origins of Popular Nationalism in Syria." Gelvin acknowledges that already "during the mid-to-late 19th century a populist political sociability emerged in Syria," but he underlines the social dynamics of the postwar popular demonstrations.
- 136. Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, Suyu Arayan Adam, 195.
- 137. Quoted in Friedman, *British Miscalculations*, 56. See also: Watenpaugh, *Being Modern in the Middle East*, 177.
- 138. Nadine Méouchy, "From the Great War to the Syrian Armed Resistance Movement (1919–1921)," 516.
- 139. Provence, "Ottoman Modernity, Colonialism, and Insurgency in the Interwar Arab East," 206. Provence corrects Tauber's argument that the Ottoman military background of the Arab insurgents did not play a role in Turkish-Arab relations: Tauber, "Syrian and Iraqi Nationalist Attitudes to the Kemalist and Bolshevik Movements," 904.
- 140. Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, 302, 303, 306.
- Provence, "Ottoman Modernity, Colonialism, and Insurgency in the Interwar Arab East," 207.
- 142. Gelvin, Divided Loyalties, 187.
- 143. Ibid., 3, 111, 113, 116, 133-34.

- 144. Amal Vinogradov, "The 1920 Revolt in Iraq Reconsidered," 136.
- 145. Quoted in Friedman, British Miscalculations, 191.
- 146. Report by Commander Heathcote-Smith, Constantinople, July, 24, 1919, FO.371.4158.118411, in Şimşir, British Documents on Atatürk (1919–1938), Vol. 1, 58; "Weekly Summary of Intelligence Reports Issued by M.I.1c., Constantinople Branch for the Week Ending 13th May, 1920," May 24, 1920, FO.371.5168.E.6151, in idem, British Documents on Atatürk (1919–1938), Vol. 2, 111.
- 147. For *Hakimiyet-i Milliye*'s coverage of uprisings in Africa and Asia, see Hadiye Yılmaz, *Kurtuluş Savaşımız ve Asya-Afrika'nın Uyanışı Hâkimiyeti Milliye Yazılarıyla. Liwa-el-Islam* was a biweekly political journal published in Berlin from March 1921 until December 1922. The journal was published in Ottoman-Turkish, German, Farsi, and Arabic. For detailed information, see Gerhard Höpp, *Arabische und islamische Periodika in Berlin und Brandenburg, 1915–1945,* 25–32, 80–83; A. Alp Yenen, "Berlin unter dem Banner des Islams," 89–134; Selçuk Gürsoy, ed., *Enver Paşa^cnın Sürgünü*.
- 148. Hakimiyet-i Milliye, February 2, 1920, quoted in Yılmaz, Kurtuluş Savaşımız ve Asya-Afrika'nın Uyanışı Hâkimiyeti Milliye Yazılarıyla, 41. A similar subordination of the Anatolian movement to the uprising of the oppressed peoples of the world can be found also in the Unionist publications: Mim-Re, "İngiltere İmparatorluk Meclisi," Liwa-el-Islam 1, no. 9 (1921): 92.
- 149. Quoted in Roderic H. Davison, "Middle East Nationalism," 343.
- 150. Grigory Zinoviev (chair of the Executive Committee of the Comintern) in his opening speech at the First Congress of the Peoples of the East on September 1, 1920, in Baku: John Riddell, ed., *To See the Dawn*, 88.
- Fred H. Lawson, "The Northern Syrian Revolts of 1919–1921 and the Sharifian Regime," 265.
- 152. The expression "Holy War Made in Germany" was coined in 1915 by the Dutch scholar of Islamic and Oriental Studies Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, in an article critical of his German Orientalist colleagues involved in German war propaganda. For the English translation of his Dutch article, see Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, The Holy War "Made in Germany."
- 153. Mustafa Aksakal, "'Holy War Made in Germany'?" 187.
- 154. This was the main policy of the Ottoman Army's intelligence and special operations branch, Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa (Special Organization), which was also closely connected to paramilitary and underground branches of the CUP. Due to missing archival sources and the disputed role of the organization during the Armenian massacres, only a few scholarly surveys on the history of Teşkilat-1 Mahsusa are available: see Philip H. Stoddard, "The Ottoman Government and the Arabs, 1911 to 1918."
- 155. For the increase of "new" jihad calls between 1914 and 1920, see Méouchy, "From the Great War to the Syrian Armed Resistance Movement (1919–1921)," 512–13. See also Lawson, "The Northern Syrian Revolts of 1919–1921 and the Sharifian Regime," 262.
- 156. Halabi, "Liminal Loyalties," 26.
- 157. Ferris, "'The Internationalism of Islam," 66.
- 158. Yapp, The Making of the Modern Near East, 303.

- 159. CAB/27/34, quoted in Ferris, "The British Empire vs. the Hidden Hand," 340.
- Alec L. Macfie, "British Intelligence and the Turkish National Movement, 1919– 22," 14.
- 161. Ferris, "The British Empire vs. the Hidden Hand," 339-40.
- 162. Karl K. Barbir, "Memory, Heritage, and History," 106.
- 163. Phebe Marr, The Modern History of Iraq, 28.
- 164. Burke, "Orientalism and World History," 494.
- 165. Audeh, "The Ideological Uses of History and the Young Turks," 572.
- 166. Ibid., 690-91.
- 167. Herbert Diel, "Beziehungen zwischen islamischer Bewegung, Bolschewismus und Sozialismus," June 6, 1919, PAAA R 14553, 5.
- 168. For the concept of "global movements" and "global moments," see Sebastian Conrad and Dominic Sachsenmaier, "Introduction."
- 169. Provence, "Ottoman Modernity, Colonialism, and Insurgency in the Interwar Arab East," 206–7.
- 170. Leone Caetani, "Sees East in a Ferment: Italian Orientalist Fears the Effect of Partitioning Turkey," New York Times, June 1, 1919, quoted (with an erroneous date) in Friedman, British Miscalculations, 17.

"Eternal Sunshine of an Obscure Mind"

World War I, the Imperial Collapse, and Trauma Management in the New Turkish Republic

Mehmet Arisan

One of the most significant outcomes of World War I in Europe can be said to be the end of the idea of empire in its classical or primordial sense. The war put an end to any political entity that maintained a multireligious or multiethnic social structure. In this sense the impact of World War I on the Ottoman Empire can be assessed in a multilayered fashion.

First, the demise of the Ottoman Empire created a regional turmoil that affected both the Middle East and the Balkans, which is still continuing today. The social and historical dynamics of the newly formed states in the Middle East and the Balkans after the Great War cannot be properly conceived without taking into account its peculiar relation to the Ottoman past. Second, the impact of World War I on the Ottoman Empire and its demise can further be conceived in a wider perspective by comparing the impact of the demise of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Russian Empire. All three empires had a relatively multiethnic and multireligious social structure and were controlling a very wide territory. Maybe the Austro-Hungarian Empire can be spared from this assessment, for it stood on the scene of history a relatively shorter time than the Russian Empire and Ottoman Empire and dominated relatively less land than the other two empires. In this sense the trauma of the demise of Austro-Hungarian Empire was less drastic than the impact of the end of the Ottoman Empire and Russian Empire.

Nevertheless, these empires all left remainders, mostly in the form of nation-states. In some cases, however, an empire as a whole can be transformed into a totally different entity, such as the Soviet Union in the Russian case. Certainly all the large and small nation-states in the Middle East and in the Balkans can be counted as the remainder of the Ottoman Empire. Thus the issue in this chapter is the basic remainder: the ruling core of the Ottoman Empire and what it transformed into afterward.

It can be claimed that the various remainders of the "shattering empires" (regardless of being new nation-states or other multinational and multireligious political entities like the Soviets) all have a peculiar relation with their own past. This is crucial in understanding the inner dynamics of the modern political regimes. To explore and understand these peculiar dynamics it may be useful to compare each remaining political entity's relationship to its imperial past.²

This chapter, however, analyzes the unique patterns of transformation of the core of the Ottoman Empire into nation-states by considering its own peculiar dynamics, even though the other nation-states that emerged in the Balkans and the Middle East are referred in particular contexts. The particular argument here may constitute an opportunity to conduct wider research to understand the traces of the multiethnic and multireligious empires left in their homogenized and shrunken parts.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines a spontaneously evolved mechanism for political maintenance, a unique basis of political legitimacy in the modern Turkish Republic that depends on a cynical disbelief in the idea of popular sovereignty and a sense of ongoing dissatisfaction. This basis of political legitimacy is the result of a peculiar management (or mismanagement) of the trauma of losing an empire. The basic point is that the new Republic never dared to face the great defeat of World War I or the loss of a 600-year-old empire.

The literature (fiction and nonfiction) written in the Republican era on the Turkish War of Independence that followed the defeat in World War I greatly outnumbers the works about the Great War. The conflict in the Dardanelles constitutes an exception to this because it has been seen as one of the most legendary victories in World War I, but it has generally been defined as a "Turkish" victory rather than a victory of the Ottoman Imperial Army. Most of the literature about the era concerns both World War I and the War of Independence, which followed the Great War by a few years. In most of the literature produced in the first decades of the

new Republic, however, these two wars were generally represented as one, resulting in the birth of a brand new Republic out of the ashes of a decadent empire.

The emergence of a new nation-state creates a justificatory narrative that uses historical events and symbols selectively and often in an illusory fashion.³ But the imperial past and the trauma of a huge loss cannot easily be eliminated by constructing a new discourse of nation and a selective reading of history. This loss was particularly intense in the minds of the founding elite of the Turkish Republic. The Republic's endeavors to construct a new narrative for the republican regime depending on popular will failed to provide a cohesive discourse and consensus among the competing social and political groups. By rejecting the reality of losing an empire and the reasons that led to it, members of the new regime disavowed the imperial past. They ignored the responsibility of the new Republic's founding elite for the downfall of the Ottoman Empire and blocked any channel to interrogate its multilayered progress in history. This led to the imaginary and fantastic readings of the past in two ways. First, the Ottoman past was conceived as a retrospective dystopia of a dreadful patrimonialism, which was naturally accompanied by a prospective utopia of total emancipation from any trace of the ancien régime that would make the new Turkey one of the leaders of the contemporary world. The second is a retrospective utopia of a glorious and mighty Ottoman past that dominated the world. In one way or another, not facing the realities of the Ottoman past obviously leads to a specific utopian vision of politics with a sense of total glory and a final phase of attaining (or at least sharing) world power. This has led to very important pathological aspects of modern Turkish politics. The first is an ongoing sense of transience, which has fed an ongoing dissatisfaction and discomfort with any sense of belonging, identity formation, or political power. The second is a cynical and insincere attachment to the idea of popular sovereignty and representative democracy. Ironically these two factors constitute the common behavioral pattern of the competing currents in modern Turkish politics. This situation will continue unless the modern Turkish Republic constructs a more realistic relationship to its past that would eliminate any rejection or fantastic glorification of the imperial past. Both of these are the symptoms of disavowing the responsibility to face the loss of a 600-year-old empire and the reasons that led to it. Only then may we talk about a strong basis for embracing a modern nation-state established on the principle of popular will.

"THE DREAM OF CONQUEST IN DEFEAT": DECLINE, FANTASIES OF RETRIEVAL, AND THE OTTOMAN ROAD TO WORLD WAR I

The trauma of losing an empire cannot be solely connected to defeat in World War I.4 Its initial symptoms can be observed at the end of the eighteenth century, particularly in the loss of Crimea and the treaty of Küçük Kaynarca. This was gradually magnified throughout the nineteenth century by great territorial losses,⁵ which directly influenced the traditional perception of political power and the legitimacy of the sultanate. Despite the territorial losses in the nineteenth century, none of them was as significant as the loss of the Balkans in 1913, which would lead the ruling elite of the collapsing empire to conceive a different form of belonging and identity than the multinational and imperial understanding and a different territorial origin or homeland, which had been the Balkans for the Ottoman Empire for centuries.7 Certainly World War I struck the final blow to the empire, which also ended the Young Turk era. This period can be defined as the desperate search for a new mode of existence for the empire that involved various utopian and irredentist fantasies of retrieval of an imagined imperial glory manifested in the form of Turanism, pan-Turkism, pan-Islamism, or an ambiguous mixture of all three.8 After the catastrophic defeat in World War I, however, all these fantasies of retrieval vanished instantly. It can be said that the World War I defeat forced the collapsed empire to transform into a homogeneous nationstate stuck in Anatolia, an alien territory that the Ottoman ruling elite had long been ignorant of. "Forced" is the keyword here, because the disappearance of any form of irredentist fantasy does not mean the celebration of the foundation of a nation-state out of the ashes of the Ottoman Empire. Instead such fantasies were repressed or foreclosed as a result of the historical and geopolitical circumstances. This brought a form of disappointment with the new regime and the nation that generated a certain longing or fantasy of an omnipotent, all-encompassing political power. It has never been manifest directly in the history of the Turkish Republic, but its influence on modern Turkish political practice, which has been swinging between military tutelage and political authoritarianism for many decades, could always be felt.

Before dealing with the process of repressing or disavowing any irredentist fantasy of retrieval and its political outcomes, it is necessary to illustrate the origins of this fantasy and why it was manifested in different forms. This desire for retrieval of imperial glory involves a mythicized

imperial past that depends on the gradual decline of the empire and the frustration that it generated. In this sense it does not mean the retrieval of the historically validated complex state structure and the series of traditional sociopolitical practices of the Ottoman Empire. Like in all fantasies and myths, however, it had a touch of reality.

The Origins of Late Ottoman Fantasies:

The Classical Ottoman Perception of Political Power and Legitimacy Although we have a vast literature on the social, political, and economic structure of the classical age of the Ottoman Empire,9 studies on the peculiar dynamics between the ruler and the ruled and on the perception of political power (particularly of the sultan and the sultanate) by the different segments of the Ottoman subjects are very limited. 10 It is generally accepted that Islam was the basic tool for legitimacy of the sultanate and that the loyalty of the non-Muslim populations was attained by certain mechanisms of deterrence. 11 The significance of Islam for the endurance and legitimacy of the Ottoman polity cannot be denied, but the Ottoman Empire's relationship with Islam was different from that of the pre-Ottoman Muslim states that solely depended on Shari^ca. In the Ottoman Empire the state was not structured by or for Islam but vice versa (Devlet-i Islamiyye Degil Devlet-i Aliyye-i Osmaniyye). 12 Islam was the basic tool for the various acts and practices that seemed more appropriate for a decentralized highly flexible state structure in the classical period.¹³ The peculiar relation with Islam in the Ottoman Empire can be related to the different influences in the formation of the Ottoman state mechanism and practice. First, it was influenced by the Byzantine administrative model to a great extent. 14 This led the empire to centralize religious practices to increase state control, utilize Islam for its own ends, and most important of all consolidate a transcendental understanding of imperial power embodied within the image of the sultan, just like the Byzantine concept of the *imperium*. ¹⁵ Another non-Islamic influence was the significance of the pre-Islamic Turkish understandings of state and political power.

Ahmet Yaşar Ocak emphasizes that without considering the pre-Ottoman and mostly pre-Islamic state traditions the formation and functioning of Ottoman state structure cannot be understood properly. Furthermore these influences also involved the Indian, Chinese, and Persian political cultures, which were intermingled throughout history. Ocak emphasizes three basic characteristics in these pre-Islamic traditions. First, state and power had divine origins. Second, they always aimed at "universal hegemony," which meant that any particular political power could not be confined to a specific territory but should aim for conquest of the whole world. Third, the significance of tradition ($\ddot{o}rf$) depended upon an understanding of the eternity of the state. ¹⁶ The second factor implying world hegemony had a very important influence on the Ottoman conceptualization of the "abode of Islam" (the land that was under the control of the Ottoman Empire) and "abode of war" (any territory that fell outside the imperial control). In this sense any conquest or annexation of new territories was not enough until total world domination was attained. ¹⁷ So any territorial possession that corresponded to a particular political sovereignty was perceived as temporary. This view was one of the most problematic issues in the process of Ottoman modernization and the emergence of a modern nation-state. ¹⁸

Thus the Ottoman Empire had many other sources for state formation and legitimation than Islam, but that did not prevent Islam from becoming the central determinant in Ottoman social and political affairs. These sources helped the Ottoman state to interpret or translate Islam according to its own political ends.

Islam in the Ottoman Empire was under the control of the state and dependent upon it, the shaykhu'l-Islam was not a kind of pope or patriarch at the head of a spiritual authority. With few exceptions, he never went beyond being personally bound to the sultan and representing the highest level of the religious bureaucracy. There was no possibility he could exceed his role as a means for legitimizing the policies of the state. Islam in the Ottoman state had no material means to carry out administration itself and no spiritual authority over the state administration. Given that the state at all times used Islam as a means for legitimizing its own sovereignty and policies, in my opinion it is highly debatable to say that the Ottoman state was a theocracy. The *shari* a rather than proving that the Ottoman state was a theocracy, shows the sovereignty of the state over Islam, for the Ottoman government used shari^ca only in specific and limited areas such as personal and family law. 19

In the Ottoman legal practice the sultan's law (called *kanun*) was independent of Shari^ca and enacted primarily in the spheres of public and administrative law. Kanun depended upon various sultans' decrees, which were subject to change due to the specificity and contingency of each case. "Ottomans also changed the classical Islamic theory of legitimacy

that stated that the caliph must be descended from the Quraish tribe to which the Prophet Muhammed belonged."²⁰ According to Hakan Karateke, the institution of the caliphate had never been the primary element of political legitimacy and was used loosely and infrequently by the sultans in the classical period of the empire. The institution of the caliphate would become a very significant political issue in the late nineteenth century, however, as an element of retrieving the lost glory of the empire even though the disputes about its legal foundation (in terms of the claim related to the Quraish tribe) continued.²¹

Given these arguments, Ottoman and Turkish modernization cannot be interpreted by means of a binary opposition between Islam and Westernization. Furthermore the Western-oriented reforms in the last decades of the Ottoman Empire and the republican transformation cannot be presented as the break with the Islamic past, because the Ottoman past cannot merely be defined as the Islamic past. The Ottoman past persisted in modern Turkey due to the imperial loss, but this loss was basically not related to Islam. That is the reason for its persistence and penetration into many competing political parties and movements in modern Turkey.

The significant issue in terms of political legitimacy in the classical period of the empire was instead the institution of the sultanate rather than the caliphate, because the sultan was perceived as the ultimate embodiment of a somewhat metaphysical and transcendental (but not necessarily Islamic) understanding of the state and territorial sovereignty. The sultan was associated with many issues related to the sovereignty and legitimacy of the Ottoman state, but most importantly as the embodiment and guarantee of territorial integrity. Land was a very important issue in the empire as a huge agrarian patrimony. All the territorial possessions of the empire were accepted as the property (mülk) of the sultan. The significant point is that the term mülk is not only associated with wealth and territorial possession but also means sovereignty, authority, and domination just like the term "domain." 22 The perception of the sultan as an embodiment of territorial integrity and state sovereignty also makes each sultan vulnerable to his transcendental image: he should represent the image properly without showing any personal weaknesses. In this sense the sultan denotes a form of eternal and transcendental continuity of the Ottoman state, which was called devlet-i ebed-müddet (the immortal state). Some important sociopolitical matters were also crucial for the preservation of the holistic and transcendental image of the sultan, like the material satisfaction of his subjects and just exercise of political power, which were closely related to ensuring the security of the subjects and preserving the limits of various ethnic and religious groups. These

administrative practices were based on the notion of nizam-1 alem (the order of the universe), which had a universal validity and primeval social dynamics. It presupposed a primordial hierarchy and order of the universe that was maintained by the existence of a ruler at the top, but this hierarchical order could not be changed by the ruler because the order precedes any ruler. The sultan's duty was not to change but to preserve a preexisting transcendental order. The only alternative to this order was ultimate chaos. In one sense it could be understood as the exact opposite of the Hobbesian "state of nature." Justice and customary law (örf) were the crucial notions for this understanding of order. The common point of all the disputes around the notion of nizam-1 alem in the classical period of the Ottoman Empire was keeping the different classes or social groups in balance and harmony as well as keeping a well-functioning mechanism of state. Gottfried Hagen reflects the views of the Ottoman historian Qınalızade Hasan Çelebi (1546–1604) on nizam-1 alem: the notion did not describe a utopia, but it was a philosophical model of the intricate mechanism of the state. He claimed that his period (the reign of Süleyman I, the Magnificent) was a timeless ideal detached from the time of history in terms of the perfect realization of the notion of nizam-1 alem.²³ Such a perfectionist outlook would constitute the basis of a peculiar understanding of history for the following generations of Ottomans and would certainly bring many problems.

According to Şerif Mardin, the peculiar understanding of state and "world order" in the classical period of the empire constituted a unique form of "Ottoman tacit contract," which also determined the following generations' understanding of freedom. He claims that "the institution of a tacit contract between ruler and ruled had such a continuous history in the Ottoman Empire that its mark was indelible and that the invisible political ink of this contract marked the attitudes—and also the political aptitudes—of both leaders and followers in Turkey of the twentieth century."²⁴ In general there was a persistent line of continuity between the classical age of the empire and the later reformists who led the empire to transform into a nation-state. But this continuity manifested itself in quite different ways throughout the process of Ottoman-Turkish modernization.

Decline and the Four Fantasies of Retrieval

By the end of the eighteenth century the classical pattern of sociopolitical legitimation of the empire began to be damaged not only by the territorial losses but also by the undeniable acceptance of Western supremacy.

The classical legitimation mechanism had not been working for a long time, which was crucial for social and political integrity and military discipline. In the beginning of the declining process of the empire, the ruling elite generally related the cause of many shortcomings to the inability to cope with the West in technological terms. Although this was a significant factor in the Ottoman military decline and territorial losses, some other reasons caused the gradual collapse of the tacit social contract in the Ottoman Empire.

First, it should be clarified why the endeavors to retrieve the lost glory of the empire are described as fantasies here. As indicated, the sultanate had been the basis of both political and economic power, which was redistributed from there to the subjects of the empire. The basis of the economy was accumulation of wealth through war booty and the regulation of the lands by the timar system (a form of military lease contract), which was later replaced by tax-farming contracts (iltizam). With time, however, these methods of land management became unproductive and led to the emergence of some semiautonomous local people (the local landholders) who took advantage of the weaknesses of these land management methods. They later transformed into provincial power holders or local notables called ayans.²⁶ This naturally damaged the holistic understanding that identified the sultan's existence as one and the same as the territorial integrity of the empire. But it did not cause the emergence of autonomous structures as in medieval Europe.²⁷ Rather, it created a certain mechanism of patron-client relationship between the emerging local notables and the central state, which Feroz Ahmad calls the "tributary state" in reference to Samir Amin. 28 As Ali Yaycıoğlu suggests, the rise of semiautonomous provincial power holders seeded a political practice of negotiation and alliance formation within and between competing political groups by forming a peculiar relationship with the central state. He adds, however, that this relationship did not totally replace the traditional hierarchical system of the empire: the state system based on top-down favors, appointments, hierarchy, and unconditional loyalties continued to operate.29

The West as a Fantasy of Retrieval

Despite these developments by the end of the eighteenth century the Ottoman state was still a patrimonial agrarian state depending upon some holistic and perfectionist presumptions of political power. "As a result, the social and economic structure tended to remain essentially stable and stagnant since no sector of the economy—agrarian, commercial,

or industrial—was permitted to become dominant and upset the balance" until the nineteenth century. The Even the nineteenth century did not witness the emergence of any autonomous socioeconomic structure that would become a political actor vis-à-vis the central state. This lack resulted in a situation in which all necessary structural reforms and transformations would have to be carried out by the state. The rise of the West, however, was dependent upon the rise of an autonomous class: the bourgeoisie. This class carried out nearly all economic activity within the early modern absolutist states of Europe, which developed their own value system and worldview related to their own socioeconomic dynamics, which were quite different from those of the absolutist states. The rise of the balance of the absolutist states.

While the Ottoman state sovereignty and the traditional pattern of legitimacy were weakening due to the inability to cope with the rise of the West and the gradual loss of land, this never resulted in the emergence of fully autonomous social, economic, and political actors that could lead to a new sociopolitical structure. The relative autonomy of the provincial power holders or local notables in the nineteenth century did not have such a consequence. On the contrary, it established a patron-client relationship with the state, which contributed to the continuity of the idea of an omnipotent and transcendental state while simultaneously corrupting it. The alliance of local notables and the state obstructed the emergence of new socioeconomic dynamics like the development of industry and commerce that would constitute a threat to the local notables' interests.³²

The Ottoman engagement with the Western-oriented reforms took place in this social and political atmosphere. The Western-based reforms and the perception of the West were primarily based on the Ottoman bureaucratic elite's imaginary conceptualizations. In the initial phases of the reforms the West was seen as just a center of technological advancement and the reforms were seen as the fulfillment of technological (and basically military) necessities.³³ The rising influence of the West changed its meaning significantly among the Ottoman bureaucratic elite. By the Tanzimat period the West had become a social and political ideal to be realized.³⁴ This totalistic and perfectionist understanding of the West may well be regarded as a substitution or translation of the Ottoman perfectionist and totalistic understanding of world order. In this sense the Ottoman ruling elite's affinity with the West can be defined as the first and maybe the foremost fantasy of retrieval, which was believed to bring back a supposedly lost glory of the empire. Here two seemingly opposing fantasies overlap in one desire. The totalizing and perfectionist fantasy of the West and the perfectionist fantasy of a glorious Ottoman past meet in a

totalistic understanding of power that contributes to the idea of world domination, which had its sources in the classical Ottoman understanding of world order (nizam-1 alem) and universal hegemony. But Westernization for the sake of retrieving the lost glory of the empire was naturally a contradictory situation, especially in terms of the introduction of the notions of equality and citizenship. These ideas, which were particularly introduced in the Tanzimat era, were radically disrupting the hierarchy inherent in the traditional Ottoman understanding of the world order.

Ottomanism as a Fantasy of Retrieval

Such a radical administrative transformation carried out by the Westernoriented Ottoman ruling elite surely caused reactions and led to the politicization of Islam in a modern sense. Tanzimat reforms created disappointment and led to unrest in the Ottoman administrative system as well as among the people, as the reforms had no socioeconomic and historical basis.³⁵ This led some administrative elites to search for a new legal basis that would be more suitable to the Ottoman sociopolitical structure and would also bridge the necessity to cope with the West and the traditional sociopolitical and administrative practices of the empire. Rather than referring to the traditional Ottoman understanding of state and world order, which was different than Shari^ca, however, this particular elite (the Young Ottomans) resorted to a specific interpretation of Shari^ca to establish a Western-oriented but locally designed constitution as a legal base.³⁶ Surely, as Mardin demonstrated long ago, their aim was to establish a unique sociopolitical basis of cohesion to protect further disintegration and decline of the empire, but they failed to realize this for a number of reasons.³⁷ First, Shari^ca was not the primary source of traditional Ottoman political and administrative practice and was not related to the empire's social structure. So it was not a primary local feature of the empire to be merged with or incorporated into the Western political structure. Second, Ottomanism, which the Young Ottomans introduced as a concept to unite all the different ethnic and religious communities of the empire, fell short of realizing this aim because it could not cope with the rising influence of nationalism, particularly among the non-Muslim population of the empire. Furthermore the Young Ottomans' references to Shari'a, even though they were indecisive and vague, might further alienate the non-Muslims rather than uniting them under the banner of Ottomanism.³⁸ Thus there were significant differences among Young Ottomans on how the Islamic Shari'a would be adapted to the necessities of the time.³⁹ As a result it can be claimed that Ottomanism appeared to be

an unsuccessful attempt at conciliating the newly emerging and conflicting political positions that marked the following century and failed to produce appropriate glue for the disintegrating empire.

Islamic Irredentism as a Fantasy of Retrieval

The Young Ottomans managed to initiate a constitution and a parliament in 1876, though it was highly debatable whether they realized their mostly conflicting political projections. 40 Sultan Abdülhamid II abolished the constitution in 1878 by emphasizing the urgent situation and imminent threats that confronted the empire. In fact the territorial losses peaked during his reign. It became very difficult to control the Ottoman territories, mostly inhabited by the non-Muslim population of the empire. The empire was obviously in a process of collapse: the sultan's only hope was to create an Islamic-based political motivation to unite all the Muslim populated territories of the empire and to establish alliances with other Muslim states against the West. 41 The pan-Islamist discourse in the Hamidian era was successful to a great extent in keeping the Muslimpopulated territories of the empire unified, despite the flourishing of Syrian and Egyptian nationalisms and Bedouin rebellions. 42 Furthermore Abdülhamid II employed the institution of the caliphate successfully, although its legitimacy had long been debatable among the Arabs, as indicated above. Some Arab objections were raised to such an employment of the caliphate by the sultan, but it was in their interest to support the Hamidian regime due to the political conjuncture of the time. Therefore the caliphate was not raised as an issue of dispute.⁴³

In fact, rather than constructing an Islamic irredentist utopia Abdülhamid II's pan-Islamist discourse was related to pragmatic concerns. The pan-Islamist discourse was utilized as a tool for survival rather than retrieval because the empire's position was too dire to conceive a retrieval of lost glory. Nevertheless pan-Islamist discourse constituted one of the manifestations of a vain hope to attain the imagined and supposedly lost imperial glory in the last decades of the empire. It also served as a supplement to some Turkist and pan-Turkist discourses in the CUP era and to the CUP's war campaigns during the Balkan Wars and World War I.

Toward the End: The CUP era and the Blurring Fantasies of Retrieval The Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) era fit the phrase "the dream of conquest in defeat": the closer the empire came to total demise, the more the CUP's ruling elite became enthusiastic about war to retrieve the lost territories of the empire. The CUP emerged as a political

movement in reaction to Abdülhamid's policies. It held the sultan responsible for the drastic loss of land and losing respect among the world powers and forced him to initiate the second constitution and the parliament in 1908. One year later, following a rebellion to suspend the constitution by a group of religious fundamentalists (even though no evidence indicated the sultan's involvement), the CUP dethroned Abdülhamid II and replaced him by Mehmed V (Sultan Mehmed Reşad). The CUP's basic source of inspiration was Western-oriented scientific rationalism to replace the traditionalist perspective that Abdülhamid II tried to retrieve. 45 Ironically what they aimed at was not so different from the goal of Abdülhamid II: to prevent the collapse of the empire and constitute a powerful polity that could cope with the world powers of the time. Although the CUP was partially influenced by some nationalist ideas, saving the 600-year-old multinational empire from collapse had priority over all other objectives. This not only resulted in the CUP's autocratic rule, which emptied the constitution of meaning, 46 but also led the CUP to construct a contingent and inconsistent discourse of identity. It was swinging among Ottomanism, Islamism, and Turkism or sometimes appeared as an ambiguous mixture of them shaped by the strong influence of the Western ways of conceiving self-identity. After the great shock of the Balkan defeat that caused the loss of significant territories in the heart of the empire, the nationalist and Islamist sentiments began to be more effective in the CUP in relation to Ottomanism.⁴⁷

Although members of the CUP were considered pragmatic in terms of utilizing the Islamist, Turkist, and Ottomanist discourses interchangeably according to the varying sociopolitical conditions, they had a cause for this pragmatism: it constituted their constant and connected them both to their opponent Abdülhamid II and to the Ottoman tradition, which they rejected in a hesitant way. Until the end members of the CUP were well aware that they were struggling for the survival of the empire. Their dedication to such a cause was the proof of their strong belief in the notion of the *devlet-i ebed müddet* (the immortality and transcendence of the state). This was the essence: Ottomanism, Islamism, and Turkism were temporal manifestations of it. This could also be the reason why "the CUP opposed the new Westernisation movement that emerged as a by-product of late Ottoman materialism despite the strong secularist tendencies of many of its leading members." 48

By World War I, when losing the empire became an imminent possibility, the CUP recalled the most utopian and aggressive fantasies with irredentist claims: pan-Turkism and pan-Islamism. Although pan-Turkism

never became the official or hegemonic discourse of the leading elite of the time, it found a noticeable place among the intelligentsia after the Ottoman Empire lost almost all its territories in the Balkans. Indeed it was an ambiguous manifestation of the desire for the retrieval of a certain imperial glory in the form of an irredentist fantasy. This also points to a certain rejection of being confined in Anatolia after having dominated territories that spread over three continents.⁴⁹ Although Islam never ceased to be part of any desire to retrieve the collapsing empire, in the face of the Arab rebels as well as Albania's desire for independence the significance of any Islamist irredentism faded. At the beginning of World War I, however, CUP utilized a pan-Islamist discourse of jihad to mobilize a wider alliance against the Entente powers. The irony here is that the other members of the alliance of which the Ottoman Empire was part that were fighting against the Entente powers were all Christian states. The loss of all the Arab-populated territories after the Great War meant the end for any Islam-oriented irredentist fantasy. It was not the end of using Islam as a political means, however. The Turkish War of Independence that followed the great defeat constituted a good example of this.

AFTER THE GREAT WAR: POLITICS AND TRAUMA MANAGEMENT IN THE NEW REPUBLIC

The most significant consequence of World War I was of course losing the 600-year-old empire in every sense. The idea of this loss was not new, however, and had been very influential in determining policies and internal political divisions during the nineteenth century. In fact the origin of all these fantasies of retrieval was this very sense of loss, which consequently determined the emergence of competing modern political discourses and movements, depending on what ground the strength and glory of the empire would be retrieved.

When the Ottoman government signed the Armistice of Mudros followed by the Treaty of Sèvres, Anatolia (the last resort of the empire) was also partitioned among Britain, France, Greece, and Italy except for a small piece of territory. It was obvious that there was no empire to retrieve its lost power. But the mobilization in Anatolia against the occupation of the Entente powers was striking. If all the wars that led the empire to collapse had been fought with the hope of regaining imperial glory, what can be said about the War of Independence after the total imperial demise?

Something more than the idea of territory and the physical existence of the sultan permeated the nineteenth-century endeavors to retrieve the lost imperial glory and later efforts to save the empire from collapse. These were just embodiments of a more omnipotent and transcendental essence that provided the basic glue or peculiar legitimacy in the classical period of the empire, which Mardin called the "Ottoman Tacit Contract."⁵⁰ In this sense the War of Independence had no reference to a Western-oriented concept of freedom, popular sovereignty, or a republic. The ideal of the empire and the sultanate was still to be saved, even though its physical existence was nearly gone. These ideals made the existing sultan and the government that accepted the occupation more disgusting to the people of Anatolia. Because of the "betrayal" of the existing sultan, the imperial references were relatively weak. But the motivational rhetoric of the War of Independence contained very powerful references to Islam and a vague concept of the nation. No clear and distinct reference to Turkish identity, however, was made until the tide of the war turned to the advantage of the Ankara government.⁵¹

When the War of Independence ended with the victory of the Ankara government, the Turkish Grand National Assembly abolished the sultanate in 1922. This was not met with any opposition after the last sultan's weakness and cowardice during the occupation years and the War of Independence. Although the foundation of a new and modern independent nation-state depending on the principle of national sovereignty generated a certain enthusiasm among the people of Anatolia, the majority of the concepts introduced by the new Turkish Republic had no sociohistorical basis and were alien to most people, including some parts of the intelligentsia who had supported and fought in the War of Independence. After nearly two centuries of fantasizing about retrieving the supposed glory of the empire, even though manifested in different forms, it would not be easy for the modernizing elite to put aside their irredentist and imperial leanings.

Most of the intellectuals of the time, however, who were formerly in sympathy with Islamist or nationalist irredentism, were now ready to embrace the idea of a modern nation-state and a modern sense of Turkishness confined to Anatolia. ⁵² Nevertheless the seemingly abandoned imperial/irredentist fantasies would constitute problems in conceiving a Western-oriented political institutionalization depending on popular sovereignty. The common point among all these fantasies was a certain form of political perfectionism. This was openly or indirectly related to

an absolute certainty/perfection of power that can be defined as the ultimate specter of the classical Ottoman sense of a transcendental state penetrated into various manifestations of modernity in the later decades of the Ottoman Empire and modern Turkey.

At this point it is appropriate to ask how the new Republic could cope with such a powerful specter, which might generate an ongoing dissatisfaction and distrust with the new regime.⁵³ The first solution that came to mind, as happened in the foundation of almost all modern nation-states in Europe, was to create a new history, a new national narrative of belonging that would serve to create a common enthusiasm and a homogeneous nation.⁵⁴ In the case of the Turkish Republic, however, this would not be an easy task, because the new regime was built on a catastrophic loss of the Ottoman Empire. Neither victory in the War of Independence nor the foundation of an independent nation-state could heal the wound. In order to construct a new narrative of nationalism the new regime had to cut all references to the imperial past. The paradox was that the new regime could not construct a new narrative of nationalism while mourning for the loss of the empire. In this sense the new regime relied not only on the disavowal of a catastrophic loss but also on "imposition of a historical amnesia on the nation until the nation could view its past with detachment and dispassion."55

Apart from a series of radical legal and cultural reforms (readjustment of calendars, dressing codes, units of measurement, and so forth according to Western norms) two basic reforms were crucially important in order to break with the Ottoman past. One was the introduction of the new "Turkish History Thesis," which ignored hundreds of years of the Ottoman Empire and Seljuk Empire and located Central Asia as the geographical origin of the pure and uncontaminated Turks. In such discourse Turkishness was presented as the once natural identity of the Anatolian people, who had been contaminated by a barbarian imperial past and rediscovered by the republican revolution. The discussions on Turkish identity, however, started decades before the foundation of the Turkish Republic. Furthermore the historical validity of the thesis is still debatable and was criticized on various grounds.⁵⁶ The second reform was the language reform, which had the same claims of origin as the Turkish History Thesis. It tried to eliminate Arab and Persian influences from the language in order to return to the pure language of the Turks in pre-imperial times, which supposedly had been partially retained by the Anatolian people. The particular impact of the language reform was the replacement of the Arab alphabet with the Latin alphabet. That meant

that the coming generation would not be able to read anything written even a decade ago.⁵⁷

These efforts to create a certain social amnesia and make a radical break with the Ottoman past, however, did not lead to the creation of an effective, widely shared vision of a new history or to the construction of Western-oriented sociopolitical and legal institutionalization that would result in a democratic political practice. On the contrary these efforts led to the construction of a vague basis of legitimacy that neither radically negated the Ottoman past nor genuinely engaged with a Western European-oriented democratic regime. Büşra Ersanlı points out that leaders in the early Republican era had no intention to carry out systematic research on the Ottoman past. Some scattered and inconsistent references both demonized and glorified it simultaneously by blurring some basic historical and ethnic categories such as "Turks versus Ottomans." As a result the new Republic's connection with the past was located on an obscure and imaginary ground devoid of any serious historical study.⁵⁸ The obscureness of the new republican discourse was not only on the retrospective level but also on the prospective level, especially in terms of realizing the promise of the republican transformation that was to reach to the level of contemporary civilizations in Western Europe. The so-called contemporary civilizations, however, involved many conceptual and institutional elements formed as a result of hundreds of years of conflicts, wars, and negotiations among feudal lords, church, and central kingdoms, later between the church and the absolutist kingdoms, and finally between the bourgeoisie and absolutist kingdoms.⁵⁹ In this sense the Westernization ideal of the new Republic was doomed to fail from the beginning: no genuinely antagonistic political confrontation had occurred between any competing and autonomous groups, classes, or strata that had their own values and worldviews that would lead to a radical break with the ancien régime and construct a new one with a clearly alternative ideological frame. 60 The issue is that the republican transformation was not a revolution as a result of the clash of competing socioeconomic forces but an inevitable by-product of a great defeat in World War I. Even though it was asserted that the republican revolution was the outcome of the War of Independence, the war was not fought in order to construct a new regime but to save the remaining territories of the empire.

With this sociopolitical background it would have been much safer for the founders of the Turkish Republic to stand on an obscure ground that had indistinct references both to the imperial past and to the West. Any radical structural institutional transformation might well create social and political cracks at such a delicate period. In this sense it was not the failure of the founding elite of the Turkish Republic to construct a widely accepted new ethos, value system, and understanding as the basis of a Western-oriented social and political transformation. The new republican regime in fact did not really try to transform the sociopolitical structure in the provinces except a short period in the 1940s under the presidency of İsmet İnönü. 61

Thus the Ottoman traditional understanding of political power and state had a very important influence on the modernizing, Western-oriented elite. Most of the struggles to create a new nation had a certain connection with the nostalgia for a glorious Ottoman past, which was intermingled with a transcendental, monist ideal of state. The founding elite's reluctance to face a radical transformation, particularly in the provinces, was surely connected to the continuity of a traditional perception of political power and the state. But a more powerful socioeconomic factor was the bearer of the transcendental and patrimonial understanding of the state and rendered the founders of the Republic reluctant to consider an all-encompassing radical sociopolitical transformation.

Feroz Ahmad, one of the most prominent historians of modern Turkey, always points out the role of the local notables in analyzing the modernization process of the Ottoman Empire, which continued with the foundation of the Turkish Republic. The provincial power holders or local notables were the most visible and influential socioeconomic group vis-à-vis the patrimonial state in the nineteenth century. But they reproduced the patrimonial and transcendental understanding of the state by creating a powerful patron-client network, which constituted an obstacle to the possibility of the rise of some other dynamic groups/classes or stratum that might transform the traditional understanding of political power and the state. Nevertheless Ahmad emphasizes their irrefutable role during the Great War and the War of Independence in entering into an alliance with the military-civilian bureaucracy, the intelligentsia, and the urban middle classes. This alliance, according to Ahmad, was the socioeconomic backbone of the early republican state. 62 The people of Anatolia were largely peasants and were generally seen by the republican founders as a "suspicious, sullen and resentful population that were unable to comprehend the emerging order."63 The founders of the Republic had to rely on the local notables to deal with the problem of disgruntled and alienated peasants. This was an unfortunate legacy for the republican regime, according to Ahmad, because it prevented virtually any reform

that threatened the interests of the landlords from being passed in the assembly.⁶⁴

Being the bearers of a particular patron-client network descended from the later periods of the Ottoman Empire, the local notables inherited the traditional Ottoman understanding of the transcendental state and the traditional concept of mülk, which locates the state as the center of allocation of all resources and social and political power. Such a conceptualization of the state would naturally stabilize the relationship between local notables and the power balance among them. The continuation of the clientelistic relationship between the provincial power holders and the ruling elite of the new Turkish Republic would prevent a genuine introduction and application of Western political concepts such as freedom, equality, individualism, and citizen rights so long as both the local notables and the founding elite of the Republic perceived the peasant masses as a threat and as an alien element to be contained (even though each had different reasons to perceive them as such).⁶⁵

The founding elite of the Republic was well aware of the necessity of creating a sense of unity, however, and cautious to avoid bringing to the fore a particular alliance with any group or stratum. Given the socioeconomic and political conditions of the period, the founding elite constructed a transcendental category of the state devoid of any determined content. The new regime was aiming to construct a perfect and powerful state, which overlapped with the idea of the perfect West (as the embodiment of the highest level of contemporary civilization) and the blurred idea of a past glory without particularly naming it as Ottoman. Especially in terms of the new Republic's relationship with its Ottoman past, the great defeat of World War I could not be mourned, as that would underline a certain connection to and even blessing of the Ottoman Empire. The new Republic's political discourse, however, partially depended on a negation of the Ottoman Empire's political practice and structure. The Republic also could not affirm the demise of the Ottoman Empire, because the founders of the Republic were also the ones who were fighting to prevent such a catastrophic consequence.

Like the Balkan defeat in 1913, World War I was also a remarkable defeat that could not be mourned, because that would constitute a threat to the constitution of the "new." But the intense desire to construct a Western-oriented social and political structure would surely be obscured by various historical circumstances, which also obscured the source of the desire for newness. It became unclear whether the desire to construct a

new country emanated from envy of the West or from a continuous longing for a long-forgotten sense of world domination and lost glory. In one way or another the perception of the great defeat in World War I opened the door for a great paradox that would pave the way for a long-lasting and troubled democratic practice in Turkey.

The sustaining of a transcendental and omnipotent understanding of state that was devoid of any particular sociopolitical content might be the best solution that the founders of the Turkish Republic deliberately or accidentally put into practice. As long as the idea of an omnipotent state that accumulates all economic and political power remained, however, all the competing political groups, parties, and movements would aim to seize the state as a whole rather than representing different groups and interests in the process of legislation. Such an understanding and practice of politics would continue to produce and reproduce the clientelistic relationship between the state and the different portions of the society and endlessly feed the desire to seize the whole state mechanism as the basis of all modern political competition. As a result Western-oriented legal and political institutionalization and procedures would be perceived as nuisances or unnecessary impediments on the road to attaining an allencompassing power.66 That would make the hundred-year-old engagement with Western political modernization a cynical endeavor.

Such a political regime offered two possibilities. It might produce a tutelary regime.⁶⁷ Such a regime would limit political participation and competition in order to keep the transcendental and omnipotent idea of the state devoid of any particular political meaning.⁶⁸ Or it might cause a violent or harsh political conflict that might result in the totalitarian or authoritarian imposition of a particular political position or ideology.⁶⁹

In order to overcome the paradoxes apparent in the process of modernization it may be useful to construct a more neutral and unperturbed relationship with the past by evaluating all its positive and negative aspects in order to prevent any fantastic glorification or demonization, which may also help to generate more prudent and felicitous policies in domestic and international affairs.

NOTES

- 1. Michael A. Reynolds, Shattering Empires, 1–18.
- 2. Karen Barkey, "Thinking about Consequences of Empire."
- 3. Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities.
- The quotation in the subhead above is the title of the biography of the famous Turkish poet Yahya Kemal written by Beşir Ayvazoğlu, which also reflects the

- feelings of defeat, despair, and hope at the time of World War I and the Turkish War of Independence: Beşir Ayvazoğlu, *Bozgunda Fetih Rüyası*.
- 5. Behlül Özkan, From the Abode of Islam to the Turkish Vatan, 12-18.
- Selim Deringil, The Well-Protected Domains, 135–49. See also İlber Ortaylı, İmparatorluğun En Uzun Yüzyılı, 2010.
- 7. Handan Nezir Akmeşe, The Birth of Modern Turkey, 140. See also Halil İnalcık, The Ottoman Empire, 76–88, idem, Devlet-i Aliyye: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Üzerine Araştırmalar—I, Klasik Dönem (1302–1606): Siyasal, Kurumsal ve Ekonomik Gelişim (Istanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2009), 205–25.
- 8. Erik J. Zürcher, The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building, chapters 9 and 16.
- 9. The classical age of the Ottoman Empire has generally been accepted as the period between its foundation in the late thirteenth century and the sixteenth century, which mostly depends on Halil İnalcik's book *The Ottoman Empire*. If we consider the era when the Ottoman Empire was most influential in world politics as a world hegemon, however, then the periodization in the edited volume by Suraiya Faroqhi and Kate Fleet, *The Ottoman Empire as a World Power, 1453–1603*, would be more appropriate (see Suraiya Faroqhi, "Introduction," 1–18; and Kate Fleet "The Ottomans 1451–1603: A Political History Introduction," 19–43). In fact, any talk of the supposed glory of the empire depends upon the period when it was ruled by the three most glorified Sultans, Mehmed II (the Conqueror, r. 1451–81); Selim I (the Strong, r. 1512–20); and particularly Süleyman I (the Magnificent, r. 1520–66). This is also mentioned as the golden age of the Ottoman Empire in Christoph K. Neumann, "Political and Diplomatic Developments," 53.
- Hakan T. Karateke and Maurus Reinkowski, Legitimizing the Order: The Ottoman Rhetoric of State Power, 3.
- 11. Karateke notes, "If a large majority of the people can practice their religion freely, and do not feel that they are living under intolerable oppression, the regime's factual legitimacy may be sufficient for them to be content": Hakan T. Karateke, "Legitimizing the Ottoman Sultanate," 33.
- 12. Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Zındıklar ve Mülhidler (15.–17.Yüzyıllar)*, 78–79, 95–96, 104.
- 13. İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire*, 89–118.
- 14. Özkan, From the Abode of Islam to the Turkish Vatan, 14.
- 15. Ocak, Osmanlı Toplumunda Zındıklar ve Mülhidler, 77-78.
- 16. Ibid., 74-75.
- 17. The Ottoman Empire also initiated many military campaigns against other Muslim states, especially in the eastern and southern borders of the empire from the fifteenth century onward. These were also presented as Holy Wars. The Ottoman religious elite justified this by presenting the other Muslim states as the collaborators of the Ottoman Empire's Christian enemies in the West or as "infidels" (just as in the case of Persia and the Safavids), as the traitors of the mainstream Islamic tradition. Özkan, *From the Abode of Islam to the Turkish Vatan*, 15. For a detailed account of the case of Persia and the Safavids, see Markus Dressler, "Inventing Orthodoxy."
- 18. Özkan, From the Abode of Islam to the Turkish Vatan, 18.
- Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, Perspectives and Reflections on Religious and Cultural Life in Medieval Anatolia, 53.

- 20. İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire*, 70–71, 14 (quotation).
- 21. Karateke, "Legitimizing the Ottoman Sultanate," 25-26, 30-31.
- 22. Ocak, Osmanlı Toplumunda Zındıklar ve Mülhidler, 83.
- 23. Gottfried Hagen, "Legitimacy and World Order."
- 24. Şerif Mardin, "Freedom in an Ottoman Perspective," 33.
- 25. Halil İnalcık, An Economic and Social History of the Empire, 55–142.
- 26. Metin Heper, *The State Tradition in Turkey*, 21–36.
- 27. Gianfranco Poggi, The Development of the Modern State, 16-59.
- 28. Feroz Ahmad, From Empire to Republic, 2:1-2.
- Ali Yaycıoğlu, "Provincial Power Holders and the Empire in the Late Ottoman World."
- 30. Ahmad, From Empire to Republic, 2.
- 31. Poggi, The Development of the Modern State, 60-85.
- 32. Ahmad, From Empire to Republic, 3-9.
- Niyazi Berkes, The Development of Secularism in Turkey, 30–50; and Erik J. Zürcher, Turkey, 23–51.
- 34. The Tanzimat period is generally accepted as the time between 1839 and 1876, between the Imperial Edict of Gülhane and the introduction of the first Ottoman constitution. Through the Imperial Edict of Gülhane, the center of power shifted from the palace to the bureaucracy and to a certain extent from the sultan to the bureaucratic elite. Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*, 137–92; Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, 40–128.
- 35. Berkes, The Development of Secularism in Turkey, 201-22.
- 36. Christiane Czygan, "Reflections on Justice."
- 37. Şerif Mardin, The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought.
- 38. Sükrü Hanioğlu, "Turkism and the Young Turks, 1889–1908," 15.
- 39. Mardin, The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought, 252-397.
- 40. Hasan Kayalı, Arabs and Young Turks, 17-30.
- 41. Benjamin Fortna, "The Reign of Abdulhamid II."
- 42. Özkan, From the Abode of Islam to the Turkish Vatan, 37.
- 43. Kayalı, Arabs and Young Turks, 31-36.
- Erik J. Zürcher, "Young Turks, Ottoman Muslims and Turkish Nationalists," 172–73.
- 45. Erik J. Zürcher, The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building, 112-14.
- 46. M. Sükrü Hanioğlu, "The Second Constitutional Period, 1908–1918," 74–83; and Aviel Roshwald, *Ethnic Nationalism and the Middle East, 1914–1923*, 59.
- 47. Hanioğlu, "The Second Constitutional Period, 1908–1918," 101.
- 48. Ibid., 104-5.
- 49. Zürcher, The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building, 118–21.
- 50. Mardin, "Freedom in an Ottoman Perspective," 26.
- 51. Erik J. Zürcher, "Young Turks, Ottoman Muslims and Turkish Nationalists," 161–70; and Özkan, From the Abode of Islam to the Turkish Vatan, 85, 88–95.
- 52. Ozkan pointed to Ziya Gökalp as one of the most significant examples of these intellectuals, 96.
- 53. Orhan Koçak pointed out a remarkable discontent among the intelligentsia after the republican revolution by referring to Fuad Köprülü's critiques of the new

- Turkish literature of the late 1920s: Orhan Koçak, "Westernisation against the West," 312.
- 54. Jean-Philippe Mathy, Melancholy Politics, Loss, Mourning and Memory in Late France, 1–20.
- Kemal H. Karpat, "Historical Continuity and Identity Change or How to be Modern Muslim, Ottoman and Turk," 27.
- 56. Frank Tachau, "The Search for National Identity among the Turks"; F. F. Rynd, "Turkish Racial Theories"; Bernard Lewis, 'History-Writing and National Revival in Turkey"; for a specific reference for how the official Turkish History Thesis was formulated, see Büşra Ersanlı, İktidar ve Tarih; and Etienne Copeaux, Türk Tarih Tezinden Türk-İslam Sentezine.
- 57. Geoffrey Lewis, The Turkish Language Reform.
- 58. Ersanlı, İktidar ve Tarih, 221–29.
- 59. Poggi, The Development of the Modern State.
- 60. Nilüfer Göle, "Batı Dışı Modernlik Kavramı Üzerine."
- 61. Zürcher, Turkey, 219–25; M. Asım Karaömerlioğlu, "The Village Institutes Experience in Turkey."
- 62. Ahmad, From Empire to Republic 2:15.
- 63. Ibid., 1:174.
- 64. Ibid., 1:254-55.
- 65. The novel Yaban (The Stranger] written by Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu (who was one of the most fervent supporters of the republican revolution and a close associate of Kemal Atatürk) was a very good example of the early republican distrust and suspicion of the peasants. A literary strain later emerged that romanticized and advocated for the peasantry against both state elitism and local notables: Carter Findley, Turkey, Islam, Nationalism, and Modernity, 280–83.
- 66. Ergun Özbudun, Contemporary Turkish Politics, 151-52.
- 67. Walter Weiker, Political Tutelage and Democracy in Turkey; Claude Lefort, The Political Forms of Modern Society, 84.
- Metin Heper, "The Strong State and Democracy: The Turkish Case in Historical and Comparative Perspective," in *Democracy and Modernity*, edited by S. N. Eisenstadt (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992), 142–63.
- İlter Turan, "The Evolution of Political Culture in Turkey"; Dankwart A. Rustow, *Turkey*, chapter 4, "The Hard Road to Democracy," 77–83; Şerif Mardin, "Opposition and Control in Turkey."

Haunting Memories of the Great War

The Gallipoli Victory Commemorations in Turkey

Gencer Özcan and Özüm Arzık

Seen differently from the other battles in which the Ottoman armies suffered great losses or achieved significant gains during the Great War, the Canakkale War has been marked and commemorated as one of the significant events in the official history. The Çanakkale victory was hailed because it restored the national honor tarnished by the losses of the Balkan Wars and provided inspiration for the War of Independence. As far as the order of the republican calendar is concerned, the Çanakkale victory has become the only event commemorated despite having taken place before the War of Independence. While commemorations for the Canakkale War initially were held locally, later March 18 was promulgated as the Day of Martyrs. Furthermore, while other events preserved in the national calendar gradually lost their allure in the eyes of public, the Çanakkale War has maintained its appeal in the collective memory of Turkey.² Two main reasons come to the fore to explain why the Gallipoli victory attained a special status among the other events on the republican ceremonial calendar.³ First, it is evident that the ongoing appeal has to do with the magnitude of carnage that the war inflicted on the fighters of both sides, which left unforgettable traces in the collective memory. Second, what the war represented provided politicians with a wide range of possibilities for instrumentalization of the victory for political purposes. While some lauded the war as the last victory accomplished by the Ottomans against the Western powers and thus as a harbinger of Islamist revival, others saluted it for making a national hero of Mustafa Kemal, who would lead the War of Independence and be the founder of the new Republic. These political perspectives are reflected in a variety of commemorations for the Çanakkale War. They now run the gamut of ceremonies, from pilgrimages to religious solemnities organized by various groups. This chapter highlights milestones of the ongoing evolution of commemorative discourses formed around the Çanakkale War. It also sheds light on how different political actors instrumentalized commemorations for their own political purposes and offers explanations as to why commemorative discourses were changed. Different parties and political groups were continuously involved in the formulation and reformulation of their own narratives and strove to make them part of the official discourse.

COMMEMORATIONS OR POLITICS OF MEMORY

Monuments as the spatial expressions of the most common indicators of collective memory, public debates about their construction, and rites performed around them raise public awareness of events to be remembered. The interest in spaces of collective memory seems to have gained further momentum through the centennial anniversary of the beginning of the Great War. The debate and research on the construction of monuments, development of such sites, and symbols used in those spaces has produced an increasing volume of literature. Pierre Nora's concept "lieu de mémoire" (site of memory) accentuates the importance of communal points of reference in the evolution of modern societies. For instance, development of the Gallipoli Peninsula as a space of collective remembrance and its evolution to replace Anıtkabir (the Atatürk mausoleum) as a hub of commemorative performances reveals the way in which collective memory is reshaped.

In a similar fashion commemorative practices have increasingly become a subject of scholarly interest. The literature on the commemorations focuses on the role that they play in the making and consolidation of national identity. In the formative years of nationhood the commemorations are instrumentalized in order to cultivate a sense of communality among the would-be citizens. The need to create strong bonds among citizens are acute in those years, so commemorations are expected to raise a sense of communality and social cohesion. As political necessities differ, however, the commemorations seemingly start to serve different purposes than those initially assumed. Therefore changing the form and content of the commemorations seems to have failed to get the scholarly interest it deserves.

Defining collective "remembrance as an open-ended dynamic," Ann Rigney points to the ever-changing character of collective memory. She argues that the dynamics that form collective remembrance involve "the ongoing circulation of acts of remembrance across different media, including monuments, whereby memories are continuously being refigured." Therefore formation and evolution of collective memory depends on the way in which it is framed by interplay between hegemonic and marginalized memories. Continuous performances may assume various forms that are shaped by the interaction between top-down official organization of remembrance and other less official or nonofficial bottomup spontaneous practices. But the impact and tension caused by "the complex dynamics of collective remembrance involving the ongoing interaction between private and public remembrance" inevitably yield political implications for groups that strive to form their own mnemonic communities.⁷ Formation of such communities entails employment and empowerment of a new rhetoric to get the past "mobilized for political purposes."8 The necessary condition for an efficient mobilization becomes a matter of collecting or manufacturing memory or, to use Jonathan Boyarin's adaptation of Marxist terminology, the means of imagination control that was a key aspect of class struggle.9

EARLY COMMEMORATIONS

During the interwar years there was a worldwide appeal for cemeteries for the victims of World War I that was broadened by debates as to how to avoid another war. Therefore war sites and cemeteries were used for pilgrimage destinations, mostly by peace movements. But it is difficult to argue that similar motivations were at work in Turkey. First, the official historiography and calendar for national days foregrounded the milestones of the War of Independence so that the Çanakkale victory remained in the shade of the others. Local commemorations held for the Çanakkale War during the early 1930s were meant to consolidate the process of nationhood by emphasizing the *Turkishness* of the victory.

Before going into the details of the commemorations held during the interwar era, it should be emphasized that the Ottoman government capitalized on the enormous impact that the Çanakkale War had on public opinion even before the war ended. In June 1915 the government took a group of intellectuals to the front. The group included well-known writers such as Ahmet (Ağaoğlu), Orhan Seyfi (Orhon), Hamdullah Suphi (Tanriöver), İbrahim Alaaddin (Gövsa), Ömer Seyfettin, Mehmet Emin (Yurdakul), painters such as İbrahim (Çallı) and Nazmi Ziya, and composer Rauf Yekta. This was followed by a visit to the front line by a group

of parliamentarians under Mustafa Kemal's guidance. 10 The arrangement reveals that the authorities were aware of the need to mobilize the home front to sustain public support for the war. In addition, locals have been commemorating the battles in the actual war zone. As of 2012 the local commemorations are still held in the traditional way, in which passages from the Qur'an and Mehmet Akif Ersoy's famous elegy "To the Martyrs of Çanakkale" were recited and food was served. It is also remarkable that these commemorations are held on August 10, which marked the end of the land battles, instead of the official date (March 18). 11 The first military commemorations were held even before the ANZAC troops withdrew from the Gallipoli Peninsula. The ceremony for the first anniversary of the naval victory was held on March 18, 1916. In a letter dated March 12, 1916, the Çanakkale stronghold commander Nihat Paşa was asked to make suggestions regarding commemoration ceremonies to be held on March 18. The letter reported that there should be a military ceremony and an official parade and that the most suitable and closest troops would be asked to participate in this ceremony. The commemoration would also include a religious ceremony for the fallen German soldiers at their graveyards. 12 The reply to this letter gave the details of the ceremony:

March 18, 1916, Saturday. As today is the anniversary of the big victory over the attempt by the British and French navies to pass through the Straits, a military ceremony was held in Şüheyda [Martyrs'] cemetery to recall that bright day and to pray for the souls of the ones who fell as martyrs for the sake of their religion and country and a military ceremony was held for the Germans who died in that war in their cemetery. The standard of the battleship *Yavuz* was brought from Istanbul too. Metren Paşa, Cevat Paşa, and Nihat Paşa and many Turkish and German businessmen and commissioned officers participated in the ceremony. Finally a parade was held in Hamidiye Tabya Square. Four sailors from the minelayers participated in the parade too. The ceremony was held in three venues: the cemetery in the vicinity of Çanakkale hospital, the cemetery in front of Anadolu Hamidiyesi, and the German Cemetery at Dardanos. It will be held every year. 13

Throughout the 1920s the commemorations remained humble and local. This is consistent with the demilitarized status of the Gallipoli Peninsula at the time, which rendered large-scale ceremonies very difficult, if not impossible. Some contemporary resources such as Thomas James

Pemberton note the indifference toward cemeteries as well as construction of memorial sites:

The Turks were not demonstrative, and nothing could be more modest than this pyramidal block of concrete, surrounded by five live shells, and standing only some fifteen feet in height. Its surface is rough; it is partly formed of snipers' masks—a strange contrast to the costly and beautiful monuments of the vanquished. The Turks raised no other memorial to their dead. Here and there are to be found Turkish cemeteries, but they are not marked or intended to be remembered. Doubtless some of our erstwhile enemies have found a resting place in the Christian burial grounds.¹⁴

It should also be taken into account that the regime was unable to spare time and energy to hold commemorations in a period characterized by internal power struggles and Kurdish rebellions. In the 1930s the new republican regime enjoyed relative stability. The regime seems to have attached great significance to commemorations as a token of political consolidation, such as those held for the tenth anniversary of the Republic in 1933. Although the victory was not yet listed as a national day, the official ceremonies and changing commemorative discourse apparently indicated a fresh perspective on the Canakkale War. This was a manifestation of official national historiography, which gained momentum in the 1930s. Similar to what happened to the language, place-names, and the history of Anatolia, 15 the narrative of the Çanakkale War was removed from its historical context, stripped of some of its significant details, and consequently retold as required by the official historiography. In order to meet these necessities commemorations brought the victory in the war to the fore as if it was part of the War of Independence, somehow eclipsing the fact that the victory was won by the Ottoman army. One of the striking features of the discourse was its use of essentialist statements on Turks' bravery and heroism. This was also reflected by a deliberate negligence of contributions to the Ottoman war effort by non-Muslims and non-Turks. Recent publications have invoked the sacrifices made by, for instance, Arab and Armenian soldiers and officers who fought shoulder to shoulder with their compatriots in Çanakkale. 16 Commemorative discourse was revised to such an extent that Mustafa Kemal as a young officer towered above all the rest who had in fact held commanding positions over him. At the beginning of this period calls were heard for more enthusiastic commemorations. They came from conservative and

nationalist circles and portended the divide as to how to remember the Çanakkale War that would become more conspicuous and deeper in the 1960s.

Before going into details of the transformation that gained momentum after 1934, a modest pilgrimage by a score of nationalist university students should be highlighted. The event was significant, for it was the first alternative call for commemorations. In late October 1933 Milli Türk Talebe Birliği (MTTB: National Union for Turkish Students) organized a pilgrimage to the Gallipoli Peninsula. 17 Although the group's size was moderate, the visit, led by Nihal Atsız, a vociferous ultranationalist known for his propagation of xenophobic views, had a lasting impact on the university youths. He published his impressions of the peninsula in a book in which he bewailed the dreadful conditions of Turkish cemeteries and complained about official indifference. Harshly criticizing public disinterest, he called for vigorous youth participation in the commemorations. The pilgrimage was also important because it was the first of its kind organized and publicized by MTTB. From then on the organization continued to play a leading role in mobilizing pilgrimages and paying the way for creation of alternative commemorative discourse(s). Moreover, it was obvious that Atsız was inspired by what was then happening in Germany: "Turkish youth! We call you to go to Çanakkale and march there each and every year! Take a lesson from their courage and satisfy your desire to take revenge! Don't forget that you are soldiers. If you are Turkish then you are a soldier! Don't believe in people who talk of a civilized life: ignoble talk of peace or infidels denying the past! Nation means blood! If Turkishness prevails in your honorable blood then you will feel warrior-like and crave fighting!" It is obvious that Atsız's views contradicted the government's foreign policy. So his calls went unheard in Ankara. Furthermore, in the wake of this pilgrimage, the government ended Atsız's teaching position at the Edirne Lycée.

COMMEMORATIONS UNDER STATE SURVEILLANCE

The year 1934 marks a watershed in the evolution of the commemorations of the Çanakkale victory, which began to change in form and content. Until then no large-scale commemorations had been held to mark the Çanakkale victory. The national days recognized on the official calendar were confined to the dates marking milestones in the War of Independence (such as May 19 as its beginning and August 30 as the

day of the final victory). Toward the middle of the decade a new perspective emerged that was dictated by one of Ankara's pressing security matters: the revision of the Convention of the Straits of July 14, 1923. The convention enacted during the Lausanne Conference limited Turkey's sovereignty over the Straits and demilitarized a large chunk of littoral territory surrounding the Sea of Marmara. Ankara launched its diplomatic campaign to change the demilitarized status of the Straits in 1933. As the revision of the convention entailed cooperation with its signatories, Ankara capitalized on a discourse that seemingly absolved what its former enemies did in Gallipoli. As seen in Atatürk's 1934 speech the official discourse was designed to uphold universal values of kinship and peaceful coexistence so that the signatories of the convention would readily agree with Turkey's revisionary demands. Therefore the famous speech aimed to improve Turkey's international image and its relations with the former enemies.

Heroes that shed their blood and lost their lives.... You are now lying in the soil of a friendly country. Therefore rest in peace. There is no difference between the Johnnies and the Mehmets to us where they lie side by side in this country of ours. You, the mothers who sent their sons from far-away countries, wipe away your tears. Your sons are now lying in our bosom and are in peace. After having lost their lives on this land, they have become our sons as well. It is our hope and belief that the respect we learned to feel for the men of your race in this tragic conflict will pave the way for an understanding that will render impossible another conflict of this sort. If your dead could speak they would say that they share our hope, and in their name we ask you to do what you can to cooperate with us in ensuring future peace between our respective races.²⁰

As a consequence of these factors, the commemorations held in 1934 and the way they were covered by the Istanbul press can be seen as a precursor of larger-scale ceremonies to be held in the future. Dailies reported details of commemorations held at the Çanakkale People's House, where the provincial director of national education delivered speeches and a female student read a poem on the Turkish soldiers. An article by Abidin Daver, "The Victory That Changed the Course of the History," in *Cumhuriyet* saluted Turkey as "a nation that has gained groundbreaking victories in world history" and pointed out that "despite the dispropor-

tional difference between the two sides, the belief the Turks had in themselves intimidated and defeated the enemy fleet."²² It was also remarkable that on April 25, 1934, *Cumhuriyet* gave wide coverage to the ANZAC landings.²³ It published a letter sent by an ANZAC soldier to Mustafa Kemal, which praised "Turk's bravery and nobility." ²⁴ Furthermore, the first colossal monument dedicated to Mehmet Çavuş was unveiled in 1934. It would serve as a venue for commemorations until the Martyr's Memorial was opened in 1960.²⁵

In 1936 Nihal Atsız would publish another book on how to remember and commemorate the Çanakkale War. Writing under a pseudonym, Atsıza Yoldaş, he suggested holding a competition to design a colossal monument in memory of those fallen in the Çanakkale War and changing the dates for commemorations to ensure the participation of larger number of students:

Friends! We ask the Turkish Students' Union to carry out this duty (but not as it did in the past) on behalf of all Turkish youth. The first thing to do is to make the necessary publication in the newspapers, which we are sure will not curtail their efforts. The young architects, engineers, and sculptors who are students or graduates will determine the plan, form, material, and cost of the memorial and will declare it to a committee made up of their own candidates or chosen by all the youth. Then the required material aid will be shared among the youths after the stone and sand of the memorial are carried by the youths and the mortar is kneaded with the sweat pouring down from their foreheads. We do not think that any expense will be spared. 26

Yoldaş seems to have had confidence that Turkish youths were capable of carrying out all the required work of building a colossal memorial to be constructed by 1940 on the day of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Çanakkale victory. He also proposed a change of date for commemorations and gave details of the massive pilgrimages:

This year, when everything is prepared, on July 20, 1937, huge groups of university, high school, and middle school students and teenagers who come from all corners of Anatolia and youths of all community centers will go to Çanakkale. Some people might wonder how this movement can be realized. How many times did we ask for vehicles from our government to build a memorial in

Çanakkale and visit our martyrs and were denied? Besides, can't we go there on foot? Is that not possible? The first foundation will have been laid and the first big visit will be made on July 20, 1937. July 20 should be the date to commemorate the two great victories of Çanakkale and to remember our martyrs as a nation. By choosing this date of July 20 we make it coincide with the school holiday. July 20, 1940, is the twenty-fifth anniversary of our victory in the battle and the day of our victory in peace—all Turkish youths should kneel down and prostrate themselves before the memorial, which will be suitable for the souls of all Turkish dead, and Turkish youths should recite the greatest commemoration oration of history to their ancestors: "Büyük Mehmetçik." 27

After the signing of the Montreux Convention, which increased Turkey's right to control the Straits, the focus of commemorative statements moved to the strategic significance of the Straits in order to highlight what they meant to the security of the Turkey. This shift of focus is also attributable to profound changes taking place in the international arena as well as in relations between Ankara and Moscow. The tone of statements made for the commemorations reflects Ankara's security concerns about the Soviet Union. Relations steadily deteriorated in 1939 due to the Soviet demands that the Montreux Convention should be revised to meet Soviet concerns. The commemorative statements delivered during World War II reiterated that the Straits were extremely dear to Istanbul and thereby to Turkey. Reading between the lines of official statements delivered during the war, the underlying concern was always related to the demands of the Soviets to revise the Montreux Convention. In 1943 *Cumhuriyet* stated that March 18 was a "victory that preserves and rescues Turkish Istanbul," asserting that "we are enamored with it and commemorate it every year as a symbol of the vital importance and significance attached to the Straits and Istanbul." This is again confirmed by the statements of the foreign minister, Şükrü Saracoğlu, who depicted Turkey as the real and eternal guardian of the Straits.²⁸ In 1944 Cumhuriyet again emphasized that "the victory of Lausanne following this victory [at Çanakkale] which was won by blood of thousands of sons set the seal on the verdict that the Straits will eternally remain Turkish."29

The tone of the commemorative statements substantially changed in the wake of World War II. The official discourse was revised to meet the necessities of the Cold War, emphasizing the Turks' role as the guardians of the Straits. In 1946 commentators began to state that there would definitely be a new Çanakkale if the Straits were attacked. Metin Toker reported that people were shouting that the victory of March 18 might be repeated at any time and declaring to the whole world, friends and enemies alike, that "Turkish Çanakkale will remain Turkish forever." In 1948 the pilgrimages were resumed. A group of university students and Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (Republican People's Party) and Demokrat Parti (DP: Democrat Party) members of parliament arrived by ship in Çanakkale to participate in the commemorations. The numbers of people who joined pilgrimages increased. In 1951 the ship allocated for the trip had to be changed for a larger one because it was overburdened by the number of students. The number of students are resumed.

In the 1950s Milli Türk Talebe Birliği came to the fore by playing a more active role in commemorations. Apart from joining pilgrimages, it started organizing meetings and issuing statements. Their statements, however, began to include expressions that contradicted the official understanding. MTTB's commemorative statement issued in 1954 is noted for having its reference to "fighting against the whole world and civilization." This heralded a departure from the official language, which venerated European civilization. It is obvious that the word "civilization" alluded to one of the contentious lines in the lyrics of the national anthem written by Mehmet Akif Ersoy, which qualified civilization as "the toothless monster." "March 18 is the date when the Turks created their destiny with their blood. The Turkish army altered the history of the world and its nation, by fighting against the whole world and civilization. As we bow in front of the souls of our honorable martyrs, we shout as undergraduate students: This nation will hold its star and crescent at a very high level under any conditions." ³³ In the meantime the construction of a monument began in 1954. The cornerstone was laid on April 19, 1954, but construction was delayed due to financial problems, which could only be overcome by a public donation campaign initiated by Milliyet so that the monument could be unveiled in August 1960.34

The fortieth anniversary of the Çanakkale victory was commemorated in a different fashion. In addition to traditional commemorations held in Çanakkale, official ceremonies were organized in Istanbul, Ankara, and İzmir to remember the victory. Thus the commemorations gained a national dimension. The interest of high-level politicians in the commemorations also reached unprecedented levels. Prime minister Adnan Menderes and other ministers took part in the ceremonies. The fortieth anniversary was visually highlighted by various series of postage stamps issued for the commemorations.

POLITICIZATION OF THE COMMEMORATIONS

This period ended in 1960 when the military seized power by ousting the DP government. Having seen the political potential of the commemorations, the junta seized the opportunity to increase its legitimacy. The military became the first institution to instrumentalize the commemorations. The junta's first initiative was to speed up the opening of the Canakkale Martyrs' Monument, construction of which had been delayed due to financial problems. Although some parts of the construction were not yet finished, the monument was unveiled in haste on August 21, 1960. The opening ceremony attracted thousands of spectators from the neighboring cities, including Istanbul.³⁶ Despite its shortcomings the monument immediately became a symbol of national unity and a pilgrimage destination. Being aware of its political potential, the military paid special attention to reformulating the language for commemorative practices. The minister of finance, Şefik İnan, who represented the government in the commemoration held on March 18, 1962, felt that it was somehow necessary to mention the national security concept that the military was striving to insert into the legal and political parlance: "Commemorating the anniversary of the Çanakkale victory, we now understand and realize once again that it is the spirit of national security that had such strength as to turn soil into country, and people into nation, to endure the hostility of the entire world and deny the largest armada of the world, to repel the armies of the biggest states."³⁷ Ragip Gümüşpala, the chair of Adalet Partisi (Justice Party), the main opposition party and heir to the DP, which had been ousted by the military in May 1960, sent a telegram to the government, protesting that he was not allowed to take a seat in the protocol benches during the commemorations of 1962.³⁸ The fiftieth anniversary commemorations held in 1965 were another example of the military's monopoly over the ceremonies. In addition to 20,000 people who took part in the commemorations, a large group of ministers, members of parliament, and sixteen German officers who had fought in the Çanakkale War attended the commemorations in Çanakkale.³⁹ The press coverage of the commemorations was unprecedented. The focus of the discourse in the reports was undeniably militarist. The ways in which the commemorations were organized and the themes emphasized the role that the chief of staff played in the victory. The bravery of the Turkish soldiers and excellence of the army commanders was boldly highlighted. 40 Memoirs in newspapers claimed that the Turks had proved to the world that they were the best fighters. 41 One of the stamps

issued to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary depicted two ANZAC soldiers beside a Turkish soldier who was saluting the Çanakkale Martyrs' Monument.

Although the military endeavored to monopolize all the commemorative activities, the 1960s and 1970s witnessed the emergence and consolidation of alternative narratives. The military's efforts could bear fruit only during the short periods in the wake of military takeovers in March 1971 and September 1980, in which the political language used and messages given during commemorations were meant to legitimize the military's legal and institutional position. The military's efforts in harnessing commemorative practices failed, however, inasmuch as other political groupings succeeded in forming their own commemorative practices. The military's emphasis on national unity contrasted with the exclusionary language that various political parties and groupings preferred to use. So the defining characteristic of this period was that commemorations meant to consolidate national unity produced the opposite result. In spite of the nationalist tone of almost all political groupings, the way in which the Çanakkale War was remembered displayed the depth and varieties of political cleavages.

Others also contended for the benefit of the victory. As an outcome of political diversification among youths after 1960 new political forces gained momentum. Each claimed its own version of interpretation of what happened in 1915. While the nationalist/Islamist groups emphasized that the soldiers were mobilized by religious motivations, the leftwing groups tried to portray the victory as resistance against Western imperialism and foregrounded the role of Mustafa Kemal in the victory. The Islamists downplayed Mustafa Kemal's contribution to the Ottoman war effort. The other source of contention concerned the way in which the commemorations should be carried out. While the leftist groups held demonstrations, Islamist commemorations took the form of religious rituals. A MTTB publication to commemorate the fifty-fifth anniversary of the Çanakkale victory framed the war and alluded to the way in which commemorations should be conducted:

Fifty-five years ago the Mehmetciks in Çanakkale assumed the tiring, long, and sacred duty of jihad given by God to make the Turkish nation become sovereign, gather believers under the Prophet's [Muhammad's] flag, herald that sublime religion of Allah to the entire world, and fight the enemies—the British—who struggled to destroy the magnificent 600-year-old Ottoman Empire. The

gracious verses [of the Holy Book] were revealed as if they were addressing Mehmetciks. It [the Qur'an] provides sound measures for difficulties and pains that they [believers] will have to endure during the endless JIHAD standing before them.⁴²

As each party pushed its own version, the commemorations that were supposed to foster the national identity became a source of confrontation. The parties carefully worded their announcements, counting on each expression to consolidate their own political positions and undermine the political stance of rival groups. Publications and statements issued by each group meticulously dealt with the problem of how to define the victory in the light of political problems and foreign policy issues that Turkey had been facing in the 1960s.

The debate known as the M/S Kades incident is a telling example of how the commemorations were politicized and instrumentalized by contending political groups. It was one of the first events to show how contending groups and parties raised their claims of ownership of the commemorations. In 1962 the M/S Kades set sail for Çanakkale with fifteen hundred students aboard, the majority of whom were members of Türk Milli Talebe Federasyonu (TMTF: National Turkish Students' Federation), a student union with leftist political leanings. Complaining that they had not been taken aboard the *Kades*, the rival MTTB students' union publicly claimed that "drinking, dancing, and having sex" aboard were disrespectful to the memories of those who had sacrificed their lives in the war. 43 The Islamist/nationalist weeklies such as Milli Yol and Sebilürreşad (Religious Road and Right Way) took the lead in the debate and bashed the organizers for causing such mayhem and letting disrespectful people get aboard, instead of students who would show the respect that their ancestors deserved.⁴⁴ The TMTF defended the students aboard and criticized the nationalist circles for trying to control the commemorations. 45 In the following weeks the debate was blown out of proportion and engulfed the entire society, including the parliament. 46 The cleavage between the two students' unions became more conspicuous during the rest of the decade.

In 1963, a year after the *Kadeş* incident, MTTB members were not allowed to board the ship *M/S Uludağ*, which had been allocated to TMTF. The chair of MTTB held a press conference and called for Rıfat Örtem, the minister of transport, to resign for having pitted the youth groups against each other.⁴⁷ The threatening response from TMTF displayed the depth of the cleavage between the two sides. "If there are

threats to this nation, both inside and outside, and if there are people trying to divert the nation from the path of Atatürk, then the Turkish nation will know how to nail them down, as has always been the case. If some people swear at Atatürk and lead the nation onto dark roads, Turkish youth and the honorable Turkish army will strike them a blow, just as they did forty-eight years ago."48 Usage of the theme "another Çanakkale against the enemy within" (obviously related to the infamous Cold War rhetoric of the "enemy within") became recurrent on both sides. İsmail Kahraman, the chair of MTTB, warned in 1967 that there would be another Çanakkale: "The enemy who could not pass through the Straits of Çanakkale yesterday is now within us. Yet we are expecting another Çanakkale victory in a real sense. We bear this soul and awareness: it will happen indeed."49 Like MTTB, TMTF also claimed that the Çanakkale War had yet to reach its goal. In a communiqué issued in 1968, they claimed: "While we commemorate the victory of Çanakkale that was gained by our nation for the sake of independence, we are sad and are in pain because the war could not reach its goal." 50 Furthermore, reminding readers of the Kades incident, a MTTB booklet published in 1970 identified the enemies within:

These Zionists, masons, Communists, usurpers, and *dönmes* [crypto-Jews] entwined on top of the country should keep in mind that they will exert their efforts in vain even if they, on trivial grounds, try to prevent you, who are the real representatives of the Turks, from honoring your ancestors by supporting the ones who have sabotaged your commemorations by waving from the gunwales the knickers of the young ladies who...are to become virtuous Turkish mothers. Faithful Turkish youths will go to Çanakkale by their own means and will recite *fatihas* [the first chapter of the Qur³an] in reminding the sacred martyred ancestors that a proper generation is being brought up. May your souls rest in peace. The youth that Akif called on, saying, "I was mentioning Asım's generation—it is true that it did not let its honor be trampled on," has hold of the situation and will punch the heads of all evil forces with its fist.⁵¹

The impact of everyday politics on commemorations became even more conspicuous in the 1970s. Different political groups strove to hijack official ceremonies and began to use the commemoration venues as propaganda platforms. In the later 1970s interference of Islamist and

ultra-rightist groups in official ceremonies had become so prevalent that tight security measures had to be taken to limit participation.⁵² So participation in the ceremonies was confined to certain categories of groups and people living in Canakkale. Those who would come from other cities were banned from taking part in the commemorations.⁵³ The military coup in September 1980 ended such political interference, putting all commemorative activities under strict control. As in previous coups the military tried to monopolize the commemorative discourse in order to legitimize its own position by glorifying the Turkish armed forces. Unity between the nation and the armed forces provided the leitmotif of speeches delivered by the junta leaders throughout the first half of the 1980s. It was repetitively underlined that nobody would be able to do any harm to the nation as long as its unity with the armed forces was preserved.⁵⁴ Although it is difficult to assign a specific date marking the end of the third period, it seems to have come to an end by the beginning of the 1990s. The film *Gallipoli* by Peter Weir released in 1981 acted as a catalyst for worldwide interest in the Çanakkale War and invoked many in Australia and New Zealand to join the ANZAC pilgrimages, which reached unprecedented levels in the early 1990s. The commemorations in Turkey also changed in content and form. Avoiding the erstwhile language of intimidation used by the military, governments increasingly resorted to a more inclusionary discourse to cope with the centrifugal forces that challenged the official understanding of national unity. Being exposed to new political pressures, the official discourse was refigured to cope with a new set of political conditions, which seem to have been shaped by dynamics unleashed by globalization.

CONCLUSIONS

The Çanakkale War of 1915 has remained the single Ottoman military victory that the Turkish authorities have been commemorating since the early days of the Republic. Fought and won as an Ottoman military victory, the Çanakkale War was included in the official national historiography. which depicted it as the opening battle and source of inspiration for the War of Independence. In this regard the Çanakkale victory stands out as an exception to the other important dates commemorated as the milestones of the formative years of the Republic. The historical memory of the battles fought at Gallipoli, as the only Ottoman victory commemorated during the Republican era, was shaped to bolster various political claims. The debates surrounding the annual commemorations

of the Çanakkale War have reflected differences of opinion as to whose victory it was. Public statements issued by every group meticulously dealt with the problem of how to define the victory. While the official accounts highlighted Mustafa Kemal's contribution to the victory, alternative narratives eclipsed his role and emphasized that religious motives played the decisive part in the victory. As an outcome of political diversification after 1960, new political forces gained momentum. Each claimed its own interpretation of what happened in 1915. While the Islamist groups emphasized that the soldiers were mobilized by religious motivations, the leftist groups tried to portray the victory as resistance to Western imperialism. Islamist and conservative circles strove to identify it as an Ottoman victory against the infidels of the West. Debates as to how to commemorate the Çanakkale War addressed broader questions about making and contesting national identity through daily practices.

The ways in which commemorations were held showed a great variety of political necessities that different groups and parties tried to meet. For example, in the 1960s the commemorations were exploited by various groups contending for better political positions. The military forces that seized power in May 1960 were the first institution to make use of the commemorations. The organization and themes that the commemorations brought to the fore highlighted the role that the chief of staff played in the victory. Yet others contended to benefit from the commemorations. As commemorations were geared to meet daily political needs, they failed to accomplish what they were supposed to do. Rather than fostering national unity the commemorations served as a catalyst in stirring political debates and created deeper political cleavages. Current commemorative practices for the Çanakkale War stand as a stark contrast to what authorities could have done to commemorate the victims.

NOTES

- 1. Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın, Siyasal Anılar, 228.
- 2. Cemil Koçak, "Gelibolu'da Olmak," 107.
- 3. Etienne Copeaux, Tarih Ders Kitaplarında (1931–1993) Türk Tarih Tezinden Türk İslam Sentezine, 256–57.
- 4. George Frederick Davis, "Anzac Day Meaning and Memories: New Zealand, Australian and Turkish Perspectives on a Day of Commemoration in the Twentieth Century" (Ph.D. diss., University of Otago, New Zealand, 2008) 215; Maria Bucur, "Edifices of the Past," 161.
- 5. Pierre Nora, Les lieux de mémoire.
- 6. E. Zeynep Güler, "Bir Ulusal Hafıza Mekanı Olarak Gelibolu Yarımadası."

- 7. Ann Rigney, "Divided Past," 93-95.
- 8. Jonathan Boyarin, "Space, Time and Politics of Memory," 2.
- 9. Ibid., 26.
- 10. Güler, "Bir Ulusal Hafıza Mekanı Olarak Gelibolu Yarımadası," 315.
- 11. See scenes of the traditional ceremonies held on August 10: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_DX6h_K7UzI and http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E49Lnz KcPDA&feature=relmfu.
- 12. Burhan Sayılır, "Şehitlerimizi 94 Yıldır Çanakale ile Anıyoruz," 111–12.
- 13. Nazmi Bey, Çanakkale Deniz Savaşları Günlüğü (1914–1922), 150–51.
- 14. Thomas James Pemberton, *Gallipoli To-day* (London: Ernest Benn, 1926), cited in Davis, "Anzac Day," 205–6.
- 15. Büşra Ersanlı Behar, İktidar ve Tarih.
- Mesut Uyar, "Arab Officers in the Ottoman Army," paper presented at the conference "Palestine and the First World War—New Perspectives," Tel-Hai Academic College, Upper Galilee, September 3–6, 2007. See also Salih Tamari, Year of the Locust, 2011.
- "Milli Türk Talebe Birliği'nin Çanakkale Seyahati," Birlik, November 5, 1933, quoted in Rıfat N. Bali, 1934 Trakya Olayları, 48.
- 18. Nihal Atsız, Çanakkale'ye Yürüyüş (Istanbul: Arkadaş Matbaası, 1933), 37-38.
- 19. Ahmet Mete Tunçoku, Çanakkale 1915, 145.
- 20. İbrahim Artuç, 1915 Çanakkale Savaşı, 68. In the article "ANZACS—Remembered by Allies and Former Foes: Worthy Foemen," on April 25, 1931, in the Brisbane Daily Mail, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk invited Australians to pay their "tribute on the soil where the majority of [their] dead take their last sleep on the windswept wastes of Gallipoli, cited in Davis, "Anzac Day," 212.
- 21. Davis, "Anzac Day," 215; Bucur, "Edifices of the Past," 161.
- Abidin Daver, "Tarihin Seyrini Değiştiren Zafer, 18 Mart," Cumhuriyet, March 18, 1934.
- 23. Abidin Daver, "Unutulmamak Lazım Gelen Bir Gün," Cumhuriyet, April 25, 1934.
- 24. "Çanakkale'de Türk Şehamet ve Asaleti," Cumhuriyet, April 25, 1934.
- 25. Zekeriya Türkmen, Çanakkale Savaşı, Anıtları ve Şehitlikleri, 64.
- 26. M. Atsıza Yoldaş, *Çanakkale Abidesi*, 4–5.
- 27. Ibid.
- 28. "Hem Malina Hem Mihina," Cumhuriyet, March 18, 1943.
- 29. "18 Mart," *Cumhuriyet*, March 18, 1944.
- 30. Metin Toker, "Çanakkale Zaferi," *Cumhuriyet*, March 19, 1946.
- 31. "Çanakkale Günü," Cumhuriyet, March 19, 1948.
- 32. "1000 Üniversiteli Dün Çanakkale'ye Hareket Etti," *Cumhuriyet*, March 18, 1951.
- 33. "18 Mart," Cumhuriyet, March 19, 1954.
- 34. "Çanakkale Abidesi Yardım Kampanyası," *Milliyet*, January 18, 1958.
- 35. "Çanakkale Zaferi Dün Törenle Kutlandı," *Cumhuriyet*, March 19, 1955.
- 36. "Şehitler Abidesi Yarın Açılıyor," *Milliyet*, August 20, 1960.
- 37. "Çanakkale Zaferi Dün Törenle Kutlandı," Cumhuriyet, March 19, 1962.
- 38. "18 Mart Törenine de Siyaset Karıştırıldı," *Cumhuriyet*, March 19, 1963.
- 39. "Çanakkale Zaferi Dün Heyecanla Kutlandı," *Hürriyet*, March 19, 1965, Ahmet Özkan, "Çanakkale Zaferi Kutlandı," *Cumhuriyet*, March 19, 1965.

- Azmi Kınad, "Türk Topları Ölüm Yağdırmaktadır, Düşman Donanması Hallaç Pamuğu Gibi Atılıyor," Hürriyet, March 14, 1965.
- 41. "Çanakkale Harbinin 50. Yıl dönümü, Bir Alman Subayının Çanakkale Hatıraları: Türk Askerinin Kahramanlığı Karşı Tarafa Dehşet Veriyordu," *Cumhuriyet*, March 18, 1965; "Kahramanlar Konuşuyor," *Milliyet*, March 18, 1965.
- 42. Milli Türk Talebe Birliği, 18 Mart 1915 Çanakkale Şehitlerini Anma Günü, 55. Yıl, 3.
- "Kadeş Süvarisi Böyle Rezalet Dünyada Görülmemiştir Dedi," Milliyet, March 25, 1962.
- 44. "Kadeş Süvarisinin Geri Dönmesine Mani Olunmuş," Milliyet, March 26, 1962.
- 45. "Üniversiteli Kızlar Kasıtlı Yayınların Durdurulmasını İstedi," *Milliyet*, March 29, 1962; "Gençlik Bazı Yayın Organlarını Takbih Etti," *Milliyet*, March 31, 1962.
- 46. "Kadeş Olayı Senato'da," Milliyet, March 27, 1962.
- 47. "Çanakkale Zaferinin 48. Yıldönümünü Kutluyoruz," Cumhuriyet, March 18, 1963.
- 48. "Çanakkale Zaferi," Cumhuriyet, March 19, 1963.
- 49. Milli Türk Talebe Birliği, 53. Genel Kurul, 27.
- 50. "Çanakkale," Cumhuriyet, March 19, 1968.
- 51. Milli Türk Talebe Birliği, 18 Mart 1915 Çanakkale Şehitlerini Anma Günü, 12.
- 52. "Çanakkale Zaferinin Yıldönümünde Ülkü Ocaklıların Çıkarması Muhtemel Olaylar Nedeniyle Tedbir Alındı," *Cumhuriyet*, March 17, 1975; "Çanakkale," *Cumhuriyet*, March 18, 1976; "18 Mart Çanakkale Zaferi Törenlerle Kutlandı," *Cumhuriyet*, March 19, 1976.
- 53. "Çanakkale'de," Cumhuriyet, March 18, 1977.
- 54. For examples, see "Evren: Millet Her Türlü Engeli Aşacak," Cumhuriyet, March 19, 1981; "Çanakkale Zaferi'nin 67. Yılı Görkemli Kutlandı," Cumhuriyet, March 19, 1982; and "Evren: Türk Silahlı Kuvvetlerimiz Her Zamankinden Daha Uyanık," Cumhuriyet, March 19, 1983.

Istanbul in the Early 1920s in White Russian Memoirs and Russian Sources

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After they were defeated by the Reds/Bolsheviks on many fronts, the Whites that wanted to restore the old regime and were supported by some Western powers began to leave Russia. After their evacuation from the Black Sea ports such as the Crimea, Kerch, Feodasia, Yalta, and Evpatoria, a great bulk of refugees came to Istanbul. In November 1920, in Moda Bay by the Bosphorus were 126 ships/cruisers/boats, carrying about 146,000 people. Approximately 60,000 of these refugees were military personnel of the White/Wrangel Army. The rest consisted of civilians. While civilians were settled in refugee camps in and around Istanbul, the White Army corps was settled in Limnos, Çatalca, and Gallipoli.

This chapter, based on memoirs of the White refugees and Russian archival as well as secondary sources, aims to draw a picture of post—World War I Istanbul and postwar diplomacy involving the Porte, the Allies, Soviet Union, and the Ankara government. While explaining the life conditions of the Russian refugees and the hardships that they suffered and endured, both the memoirs and Russian sources also provide valuable and insightful information on social, economical, political, and cultural life in Istanbul in the early 1920s. The Whites' Istanbul was in many ways a post-World War I city: an imperial capital under Allied occupation, full of refugees and in social and economic chaos. Therefore an examination of the economic, social, and cultural lives of the White Russians in Istanbul in the early 1920s provides a great deal of information on social, economic, and political conditions in Istanbul after World War I.

Before getting into how Istanbul is portrayed in primary and secondary Russian sources, it is important to note that many studies on Istanbul in the early 1920s are available. Constantinople under Allied Occupation by Nur Bilge Criss comes to mind. Constantinople Today: The Pathfinder Survey of Constantinople, edited by Clarence R. Johnson, and Véra Dumesnil's İşgal İstanbul'u are important works, giving significant insight into a postwar Ottoman capital. Recently published studies in Turkish are mostly based on Turkish-Ottoman sources on the armistice period in general and the White Army or White refugees in particular. They contribute greatly to the understanding of Istanbul under the Allied occupation through the eyes of its people. This chapter presents portrayals of the city utilizing these sources and other mainly Russian sources: memoirs of Russian refugees and archival documents collected from the State Archive of the Russian Federation (Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii/GARF) and the Lenin Library in Moscow. Even though some of the information they present is also found in other documents, Russian sources give a more vivid portrayal of Istanbul in the early 1920s.

One of the best descriptions of Istanbul after World War I comes from N. N. Chebyshev, a Russian émigré who arrived in the city in October 1920. In his memoir Chebyshev wrote that all the people, "even the Turks, in Constantinople," were "guests" and added that this was an advantage for the Russian refugees because it eased being a "stranger" in an alien city.³

Chebyshev was right in his observation. The Russians were not the only ones taking refuge in the Ottoman capital in this era. According to some sources, Istanbul had about 1.5 million refugees in 1920, more than the actual population of the city (1.2 million people). Of these residents, 560,434 were Muslims, 384,689 Greeks, 118,000 Armenians, and 44,765 Jews. "The rest of the people consisted of the foreigners and Levantines." Of the refugees, 400,000 were from Anatolia and 65,000 from İzmir and Thrace.⁵

This number of refugees, which excludes about 146,000 Russians who came to Istanbul in November–December 1920, however, seems to be much higher than some other sources suggest. According to the numbers provided by the General Directorate for the Tribes and Immigrants (Aşair ve Muhacirin Müdiriyet-I Umumiyesi), the total number of refugees in Anatolia and Istanbul was 2,070,000 in 1921. These were mainly people fleeing from the Greek advance into Anatolia. Only 70,000 of them were living in Istanbul. Similarly, the Ottoman newspaper *Peyam-1 Sabah* (Morning News) wrote that from January to December 1920 about 810,000 people came from European and Anatolian parts of the empire to its capital. All these sources show disagreement on how many people were living in Istanbul and how many of them were refugees. This

was probably due to constant movement and migration of the refugees from one place to another. In any case many of the people living in Istanbul after World War I were refugees.

In November–December 1920 about 146,000 Russians were added. Even though most of them came to Istanbul at the end of 1920, many Russians were already living in and around Istanbul. The first Russians, fleeing from the Bolsheviks, were evacuated from Odessa and arrived in Istanbul in April 1919. The evacuation of Odessa resulted from the French intervention in southern Russia, where the main corps of the White Army or Volunteers' Army were located. Sources note that the order to evacuate was not given by Anton Denikin or any other Russian general. On April 2, 1919, French general J. D'Ansel instructed Franshe d'Espre to evacuate Odessa in forty-eight hours. As a result about 15,000-20,000 people were evacuated. Most of them were officers of the White/Volunteer Army, along with some bureaucrats and members of the elite, including Gen. A. V. Shvarts, Metropolitan Platon of Kherson and Odessa, archbishop Anastasy of Chisinau and Hotin; archbishop Georgy of Minsk and Turovsky, and bankers Gal'perin and Ashkenazi. While 12,330 out of 15,000 to 20,000 went to Romania, 1,600 went to Yugoslavia. About a thousand people were sent to Bulgaria, while a few thousand others came to Istanbul.⁷

The Whites' defeat at the hands of the Reds in February and March 1920 despite the Allied support behind them resulted in a second wave of migration.8 This time the Whites were evacuated from Odessa and Novorossiisk. This evacuation was more planned and organized than the first one. Considering the possible defeat of his army, General Denikin had already contacted some European countries as early as the end of 1919 to accept Russian refugees. As a result Belgrade approved the settlement of 8,000 refugees, while Sofia accepted 2,500 refugees and then about 10,000 others in its territories. Another group of Russian refugees was transferred to Limnos, Cyprus, and the Prince Islands as well as Istanbul. About 25,000 Russians took refuge in Istanbul during the spring and summer of 1920. Those who migrated to Istanbul and other European cities during this time were mainly upper-class people who felt threatened by the new regime, along with officers and soldiers of the White Army.9 This dreadful evacuation was described in a dramatic way in A People's Tragedy by Orlando Figes:

The fleeing thousands of Denikin's regime all piled into Novorossiysk, the main Allied port on the Black Sea, in the hope of

being evacuated on an Allied ship. By March 1920 the town was crammed full of desperate refugees. Dignitaries of the old regime slept a dozen to each room. Typhus reaped a dreadful harvest among the hordes of unwashed humanity. Prince E. N. Trubetskoi and Purishkevich died in the awful conditions of Novorossiysk. No one gave any more thought to the idea of fighting the Reds, whose cavalry encircled the town. Seven years of war and revolution had bred in these people a psyche of defeat, and they now thought only of escape. British guns were thrown into the sea. Cossacks shot their horses. Everyone wanted to leave Russia, but not everyone could be taken by the Allied ships. Priority was given to the troops, 50,000 of whom were carried off to the Crimea on 27 March. That left 60,000 Whites at the mercy of the Reds. Amidst the final panic to get on board there were ugly scenes: princesses brawled like fish-wives; men and women knelt on the quay and begged the Allied officers to save their lives; some people threw themselves into the sea.¹⁰

As a result of the first and second waves of evacuations and migrations about 25,000 people arrived in Istanbul. The number of refugees hugely increased in November 1920, when the third and the last evacuation from the Crimea took place, reaching about 165,000-170,000 people. After the evacuation of the Crimea, 145,000-150,000 people in 126 ships came to Constantinople. According to the Red Army reports, 25,000 of these were children, 35,000 women, and 30,000 civilian men, along with 50,000-60,000 members of the White Army. 11 In Pyotr Wrangel's notes, however, the number of refugees in the 126 ships was 145,693, of whom 21,343 were directly transferred to the Serbian-Croatian Kingdom (later Yugoslavia); 4,170 to Bulgaria in November-December; 1,650 to Romania; and 1,742 to Greece. Another 4,585 stayed in the ships that the French government took over in accordance with the agreement reached between Wrangel and France and were later deployed to Katarra, Tunisia. After these transfers, the number of refugees left in Istanbul by the end of 1920 was 116,788, 70 percent of whom were living in the camps and in the city. Tens of thousands of people were still waiting on the ships. On November 27, 1920, the number of people on the ships was 60,000; by November 30, 1920, it fell to 45,000; and by the end of December it fell to 17,000.12

Istanbul hosted many more refugees than any other city in the Balkans or in Europe because it was the capital of a defeated country, occupied and controlled by the Allied powers. It was also strategically important, being located between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean and close to the Balkans. Therefore it was the first stop or transfer point for many refugees. The charity/relief committees or institutions that were to help Russian refugees also were better organized in Istanbul than in any other city in the region.¹³

Surrounded by so many refugees, both Russian and non-Russian, Chebyshev was right in describing Istanbul as "nobody's home." In fact this feeling seems to be prominent in the recollections of many refugees. As both primary and secondary sources indicate, many Russians felt that they were guests in Istanbul. The city was not only crammed with refugees but was also a transfer point on their way to European countries. They felt that they would not stay long in Istanbul and would eventually either go to a European country or go back to Soviet Russia. As time passed this expectation proved wrong for many, however, because they lacked money or connections to get visas or passports to travel abroad. Istanbul became a part of them and they became a part of Istanbul, especially in the early 1920s.

Being alien to the city in the refugees' case was mainly due to lack of a place to stay. When they did have a place to spend the night or live, it was far from being home. For most, their home in Istanbul was their suitcases, in which they carried a few things from their original homes. Among the refugees phrases such as "sitting on the luggage" or "see you at home," were quite popular in the 1920s. 15 But most of them never saw their homes again. Instead they had to live in Istanbul or in other Balkan and European cities in refugee camps, barracks, dorms, or wherever they found shelter. The problem of accommodation was difficult, because both the Allied and local Ottoman authorities were ill prepared for the 145,000–146,000 refugees. The number of refugees that they expected to have in Istanbul was at most 40,000. It took some time for the authorities to decide where to settle so many refugees. The Ottoman authorities were reluctant to allow Russian refugees to leave ships and enter the city due to concerns about order and security. The Allies also did not want all refugees to leave the ships, because they were not ready to receive more refugees than they expected. As a result some refugees waited on ships for weeks or even months. As noted before, about 60,000 to 70,000 people lived on the ships on Moda Bay from November 1920 to December 1920. In December 1920 the French opened a new waiting point in Beykoz port, which had 6,000 people on ships. Their numbers dropped to 5,182 in January 1921 and to 1,760 in April 1921. 16 For these people, ships were a

purgatory in which they became stuck. They were in no condition either to go back or to go forward.

Even though Ottoman authorities had a say in whether or not refugees were allowed to enter the city, it was the Allies who decided what to do or not to do. As victors, they controlled Istanbul. A. Slobodskoi (a Russian refugee who lived in Istanbul for a while in the early 1920s) wrote that Istanbul and the Prince Islands where many refugees were settled were divided among the Allies during that time. France controlled and had authority over the Asian side of Istanbul, the British and Italians over Beyoğlu/Pera. In the Prince Islands (thirty kilometers away from Istanbul) Heybeliada/Halki was controlled by the French. The Americans controlled Kınalıada/Proti Marmara, Italy occupied Burgazada/Antigon, and British forces were in Büyükada/Prinkipo. These powers not only controlled these places but also took responsibility for providing lodging and food for the Russian refugees.

The main authority on the Prince Islands was the Allied commander. Then came Allied sergeants, responsible for ensuring order. On the islands each one of the Allied soldiers was in practice a commander. These commanders or the high commander/commissar of the Allied powers received assistance in establishing control and order from a Russian refugee, usually a former Russian aristocrat, whom they assigned as the second commander. He was in a way a mediator between the Allies and the Russian refugees or Russian commanders. The worst of the islands in terms of the relations between the Allies and the Russian refugees was Halki. The French made Senegalese troops responsible for ensuring order there. As Russian refugees underline in their memoirs, these troops were rude and violent to the Russians. According to Slobodskoi, the main reason for this was that they had been treated badly and humiliated by the Reds in Odessa during their stay there before they left in 1919 and now, considering Russian refugees the same as the Reds, were acting on their wish for revenge. Because they were treating Russian refugees badly, they were afraid of retaliation and therefore usually walked the streets in armed groups. 17

Being in charge of Istanbul, the Allies did not allow anyone except for the sick and wounded to leave the ships anchored off Istanbul. To prevent refugees from escaping from ships they put police in and around Moda Bay. The Allied police not only watched the ships but also checked passports, visas, and other papers of those refugees that the Allied authorities allowed to leave. When refugees failed to show proper documents, the police arrested them. Besides this routine, the Allies required refugees

to show some papers guaranteeing that they had relatives or friends who could help them or had enough money to take care of themselves when they were allowed to leave the ships and go to Istanbul. Among those "privileged" refugees were "barons, baronesses, princes, princesses, senators of the Crimean Consul, former guards, bureaucrats, [and] their parasites: in sum, cadres that were brought from the Crimea. After they landed in Istanbul, "they found jobs in some idle commissions, organized works, etc. In return for this, they were paid huge sums of money. Also they obtained protection and visas from the Allies. The rest of the refugees, in contrast, suffered from difficult and tragic conditions.

When they arrived in Moda Bay, refugees aboard the ships were already hungry and thirsty because they had eaten all their food and finished all their water during the one-week sail from the Crimea to Istanbul. After their arrival the Allies failed to provide food and water for at least the first two days.²¹ What happened during these two days was best described by Grigory Rakovsky, who visited ships in Moda Bay in November 1920. He wrote that about 40,000 people were still waiting to land, but the French provided only 8,000 loaves of bread for them.²² The rest had to buy bread and water from Turkish and Greek sellers that surrounded ships with their boats and sold pieces of bread and buckets of water at extremely high prices. For instance, refugees had to pay 1 Turkish lira, which was equal then to 2 million rubles, for a bucket of water. Refugees also had to give up their valuables, such as their engagement/ wedding rings, coats, boots, and other items for bread and water. Due to this unfair exchange of food/drink and valuables, some refugees called those Greek and Turkish sellers opportunists who took advantage of the misery of refugees to make money, adding to the refugees' feeling of being a foreigner in an alien place.²³

When they landed, refugees faced similar problems with food, accommodations, and other things, even though their numbers dropped dramatically in the five or six months after their arrival. In April 1921, 30,944 civilian Russian refugees were still living in Istanbul. Of these, 6,488 lived in civilian camps (Lann, Canrober, Bernadotte, Selimiye, Halki, Tuzla, and Sirkeci), while 1,872 found shelter in thirteen dormitories or commune apartments (in Nispetiye, Flamur, Galata, Hagia Sophia, Disderiye, Şehzade, Toprak, Mahmut, Nişantaşı, Osman Bey, Feriköy, Büyükdere, and Tarabya). There were also 824 people in hospitals and 1,760 people in ships anchored in Moda Bay. The rest lived in the city either at their own expense or on charity provided by Russian or international/foreign committees.²⁴

These places of accommodation were opened or funded by Russian, American, or international relief organizations, such as All-Russian Union of Cities (Vserossiiskii Soyuz Gorodov), the Russian Red Cross, and the American Red Cross. Some of these places were free, while some required pay. While those in Lann, Tuzla, Canrober, and Halki were in rather good condition, some, such as Mak-Magon barracks, were dreadful. Built as early as the eighteenth century and neglected for a long time, these barracks had no windows, proper roofs, or water and heating system. The floors were always wet and full of mice. Despite these conditions and the poverty, thousands of people continued to live side by side in these barracks because of the housing shortage in Istanbul.²⁵

As sources indicate, Russian and other refugees were both the cause and the victims of the housing crisis. Due to the huge number of refugees pouring into the city, the cost of housing soared. According to a report by Near East Relief, an average room cost fifty kuruş before 1914 and three liras during the armistice period.²⁶ A room in the Tokatlıyan Hotel in Pera on average cost six liras per night. This increase was so sharp that an organization called Bosphore was formed to fight soaring housing prices in Istanbul. To its members, the main reason for the housing crisis was unscrupulous homeowners and numerous refugees. Nothing could be done about the first, so for members of Bosphore one solution to the housing crisis was "to send all or some Russian refugees back to their country before the winter set in."²⁷ In addition to the increasing population, decreasing numbers of houses or apartments due to frequent fires in Istanbul greatly contributed to the soaring room prices in the city. In 1918 in Istanbul 1,475 houses burned down.²⁸ During the armistice period (1918–23) almost every day a house was destroyed by fire.²⁹

Despite these prices a few "lucky" Russian refugees could afford to stay in luxurious hotels. But the majority lived in barracks, dorms, or apartments. Many lived on the streets of Pera and Galata. These were also major Russian refugee regions. Besides the Russian embassy, this area had a Russian inn, a Russian monastery, a Russian Orthodox church, and a Russian press bureau. The doors of the embassy and on the street there were always Russian refugees, asking for help or a place to stay. Their miserable look formed a sharp contrast with shops of jewelry and furs across from or next to the embassy. Some even slept on a pile of brochures and posters near tram lines. These people were frequently picked up by the Allied police. Many remained on the streets, however, because it was difficult to check all of them and prisons were packed with criminals as well as vagrants.

As a result of these poor conditions, lack of any housing, and poor diet in camps or dorms where Russian refugees were living, infections and epidemics broke out, even though medical assistance was the first and maybe the best service that relief committees provided for refugees. While the refugees were still in ships the Allied powers, with the support of American and Russian relief organizations, set up a health commission that organized places for the sick and wounded. When they landed, the first people evacuated from the ships were the sick and wounded. They were transferred to a clinic at the Russian embassy, to the French hospital Jean D'Arc, and to San Stephano hospital. In this process the American-equipped and -staffed hospitals or clinics with medical supplies and medicine played an important role. The United States and other allies also opened some clinics or special places such as the Veterans' Home for the sick and wounded.³⁵

According to the report provided by the All-Russian Union of Cities, Istanbul had 202 doctors, 277 medical assistants, 485 nurses, and 12 pharmacists who were evacuated from the Crimea when the Russian refugees arrived. Five well-equipped and well-prepared hospitals could provide care and assistance to the Russian refugees. Two of them belonged to the Russian Red Cross. The rest of the hospitals were in bad condition, with dirt, broken windows, and leaking roofs. During that time a total of twenty-five hospitals had 18,012 beds designated for Russian refugees. Some of them, such as Ranshche D'Espera, the Turkish Naval Hospital, and those in Handibi and Fener, put no limit on beds for Russians. The standard for Russians.

Most of these facilities, including St. Nicholas Hospital, the Yıldız hospital, clinics in Tuzla, Büyükdere, and Halki, dispensaries in Istanbul and Sirkeci, a sanatorium on the Bosphorus, and the pediatric clinic in Bebek were equipped and funded by the Russian Red Cross and its bakeries. Additional hospitals in Halki, Selimiye, Lann', Canrobert, Bernadott, Galatoria, and Tuzla camps had a total of 11,305 beds. Some hospitals in and around Istanbul specialized in internal diseases, infections, surgery, gynecology, venereal diseases, and convalescence/rehabilitation. These hospitals had 3,227 beds. From 45 to 59 percent of patients admitted to them suffered from infections.³⁸

Patients were distributed in hospitals according to a plan. First, all patients were brought to the distribution center in Çırağan and transferred to hospitals under French administration. In extreme cases Russian doctors had the authority to transfer patients to appropriate hospitals. This job was done by at least two doctors assigned to each hospital and five commissions all over Istanbul. A second distribution center in Hagia

Sophia made ambulances available to carry patients.³⁹ In the early 1920s Istanbul had twenty-two Russian committees and organizations helping Russian refugees in terms of their health as well as offering food and accommodation.⁴⁰ The most prominent of these were the Russian Red Cross, the All-Russian Union of Zemstvos (local governments), the All-Russian Union of Cities, and the Russian White Cross.

Despite all these preparations, some infectious diseases broke out, especially in military and civilian camps in Istanbul. "According to a report written by the French high commissioner dated December 1920, 7,000 refugees were transferred to hospitals, and both mobile hospitals set up for emergency and sanatoriums worked with a maximum capacity to take care of patients."41 Diseases such as flu, typhoid fever, and typhus were great threats to refugees, especially in civilian and military camps where they had to live side by side in poor physical and dietary conditions. Typhoid fever, "a black, long-term, and dangerous disease," broke out among civilians and army corps during September and October of 1920. Despite the lack of distilled and clean drinking water, however, the disease did not spread as feared. In December 1920 the number of patients infected with typhoid fever was only 141. The disease later returned and infected a total of 920 people. Although no vaccination against it was available during that time, a medicine called Salvarsan was effective in curing the returning disease. In the first forty-eight hours of diagnosis the disease was controlled and prevented from spreading. 42 The number of people infected with typhus was 170, many fewer than for typhoid fever. Most refugees had been infected with the disease while they were in the Crimea. Also, there were five outbreaks of pox and flu, hurting thousands of people but leaving no serious damage. 43

Besides these diseases, some cases of plague and cholera also occurred in Istanbul. Plague was first seen in ships coming from Batum. The total number of plague cases was thirty-eight. Hore threatening and common than plague was cholera, which spread due to unclean water and was the most common of the diseases, along with typhoid fever. The cholera outbreak in Çilingir camp caused the death of many people. If we consider that Istanbul's drinking water was coming from Lake Terkos near Çilingir camp at that time, cholera was a great threat to the people of Constantinople. To prevent disease from spreading the Allied authorities put Çilingir camp under quarantine and allowed those infected with the disease to die, for the camp had no medicine, no equipment, and no clinic. The barracks transformed into a small clinic was like "a wet box of stones in which many people were crawling and moaning from pain." As

a result of this every day at least five people died and were buried together in one grave, with a cross on the top. 45

In addition to quarantine, vaccination was used to prevent diseases from breaking out and spreading. But this was not possible in all camps in the case of cholera. Despite this the cholera epidemic was controlled and ended in two or three weeks. Sanatorium administrators who assigned the right doctors and personnel with the necessary knowledge and skill to the right camps to deal with the disease played an important role. As a result the number of cholera cases in Istanbul dropped from hundreds to only five. Vaccination was possible against plague, pox, typhoid, tetanus, and diphtheria. The vaccination for pox was completed almost in all camps. In some camps refugees were vaccinated against plague, cholera, and typhoid.⁴⁶

To prevent diseases and epidemics the Russian and the Allied authorities also tried to better hygienic conditions in camps. This was especially important for military camps, where officers, soldiers, and their families lived in crowded barracks. Rooms or barracks in those camps were disinfected and fumigated. To improve hygienic conditions the number of baths and showers in both military and civilian camps was increased. Despite these efforts only half of the camps had showers. Only five hospitals had five baths. The rest had neither baths nor showers. Cleaning and bathing was provided mainly in public or common baths, built at the center of camps.⁴⁷

Both health and housing problems were a result of a general economic crisis in Istanbul. Russian refugees contributed to the crisis in both a negative and a positive way. Negatively, due to their huge numbers they added a great deal to the unemployment and inflation in the city. Positively, they contributed to economic life with their cheap labor and investments and enterprises.

The first refugees who came to Istanbul from Odessa in 1919 were well off compared to those who arrived in the city in the fall of 1920. The early refugees were usually from well-to-do families and classes, including many bureaucrats and high-ranking military personnel, officers, and some soldiers. Those that arrived in November 1920, however, were more diversified: among them were not only barons, princesses, bureaucrats, officers, and soldiers but also some peasants. Those well-to-do Russians with some money on the side formed groups of three or four people and invested in meat stores, bookstores, restaurants, or café-bars. Some Russian refugees also opened sausage shops, cooperatives on Pera, laundries on Tarlabaşı (Petits Champs), and the Kromsky, Smirnov, and

Romenonka vodka factories. These businesses provided many Russians with jobs as workers, salespeople, and watchmen. In addition, a group of Russians opened exchange offices in Galata, where they bought and sold all sorts of money. Wrangel paper banknotes and cossack money were at first very popular and valuable, but after a few months they continuously sank in value. Although Soviet banknotes were prohibited by the Allies (who saw them as a means of Soviet propaganda), they were regularly bought and sold, especially by rich Russians as well as the allied navy and army personnel. Due to all these financial undertakings and investments, the early 1920s in Istanbul can be called "a period of entrepreneurship."

Many Russians also sold whatever they brought from the Crimea, including jewelry and art. Indeed this was the first business that the Russians started. A few initiated expositions in the halls of the Russian Embassy in Pera, such as "exposition de Russe," which took place in April 1920. Its official aim was to introduce the people of Istanbul to Russian art and culture. But the real goal was to sell all exhibited articles at a high profit. In the end the exposition reached its goal with a sale of articles with a total value of 8,000 Turkish liras. In a month and a half Russians made 200,000 Turkish liras from the sale of Russian cultural and art objects.⁵⁰ All the objects in the exhibition were sold at prices ten times lower than their real price. Rich Turks, British, Americans, and French paid very little (about the price of a small piece of meat at that time) for unique and priceless pieces of Russian art. Many Russians had become broke within a few weeks or months of their arrival in Constantinople. At the beginning they were all confident that in a week or one or two months the Bolshevik regime would collapse and they would be able to return to their home and forget all about this nightmare. While waiting for these events to happen, they ate whatever they had in their hands, their scarce food, and sold special wedding rings and necklaces that they brought from the Crimea.⁵¹ With no money or working skills, many began to wander the streets looking for a small job; some took whatever work they found to earn their bread.

Some aristocrats and members of the elite took advantage of their education and foreign language skills to obtain jobs in the British police forces or a French gendarme organization with rather good salaries. ⁵² The French also employed Russian refugees at their parking structure for a year and replaced them with French soldiers at the beginning of 1922. This was a satisfying job for Russians. They thought that they were in military service and dressed like soldiers. The French provided them with soldiers' equipment and clothes and a salary of forty Turkish liras. The

British employed some Russians too, even though in lower positions. They paid Russians to dig barricades against Kemalists.⁵³ This shows clearly that the British government, as one of the victors, had no intention of allowing a new nationalist government in Ankara to flourish: it aimed to destroy the government before it was too late.

Besides the French and the British, Americans provided some jobs for the Russians, especially on American naval bases. Working on the naval bases was both "profitable and prestigious because seamen were considered to be educated and special." Therefore Russians showed great interest in obtaining jobs in those places. Every day hundreds of people who expected to get a job lined up in front of their doors, but only ten to fifteen got jobs. To disperse the crowd American sailors sometimes threw water on people. 54 The Americans also employed some Russians in the kitchen and dairy in Robert College. These were important in terms of helping Russians to earn their bread. But the major role in the employment of refugees was played by Russian organizations.

The All-Russian Union of Cities found jobs for 3,718 people in 1921–22. This number had reached 9,877 by the end of 1922. Of these jobs, 99 percent required physical labor; while the remaining 1 percent were intellectual jobs such as teaching. ⁵⁵ Istanbul had many work agencies, helping Russians as well as other refugees to find jobs. According to an archival document dated March 21, 1921, Istanbul had ten major work agencies. Some of them were specifically focused on finding jobs for women as nannies, housekeepers, and so forth, while some others specialized in providing jobs for Armenians. It seems that these agencies found work for about a thousand to two thousand people. Some also tried to connect with other countries and institutions to obtain jobs for refugees. ⁵⁶

What is interesting about Istanbul during that time is that it was a city in economic crisis and yet offered jobs in various sectors for many people. Russian refugees were hired for many kinds of work in addition to the jobs mentioned above. For instance, many refugees worked as shoemakers, coach drivers, packsaddle makers, fishers, salespeople, cooks, laboratory assistants, metal workers, carpenters, masons, mechanics, tailors, gardeners, photographers, cloakroom attendants, receptionists, hat makers, lampshade makers, pharmacists, shop assistants, and telegraph operators. Some former army officers were self-employed, making special ornamented swords. Some others worked as shepherds, watchmen, grooms, or doorkeepers on farms in and around Istanbul. "Russian refugees were exploited badly at these works. They worked fourteen to fifteen hours a day and were paid fourteen to fifteen liras monthly." Similarly,

refugees working in fez factories earned a monthly salary of forty liras/twenty-nine dollars.⁵⁹

We learn from Russian sources that refugees also worked in the Turkish-Greek border region for low wages. "They were loading or unloading coal in railroad stations, placing telegram lines, repairing roads, watching depots in Küçük Çeşme, and shepherding sheep in Makriköy/Bakırköy." ⁶⁰ A few Russian refugees opened and ran barns on the hills of Kanlıca and Büyükdere. ⁶¹ In addition, many agricultural workers were employed in fields around Istanbul. ⁶² Relief committees and organizations like the All-Russian Union of Cities tried to contribute to the Russians' well-being by funding some cooperatives or vocational unions. ⁶³

Russians also opened restaurants and bars. Sources note twenty-five restaurants, bars, and patisseries between the Tunnel and Taksim owned or run by Russians. The most famous of these were Turkuaz, Karpiç, Rose Noir, Yar, Maksim, Medved, Club Commerciale Russe, Le Grand Cercle Moscovite, Kit-Kat, Kievskii Ugolok, Eden, Restaurant Russe, and Petrograd. Besides serving their customers Russian food, music, and dance, these places were very popular among Ottoman men and Allied officers or bureaucrats because of the Russian women working as waitresses, singers, or dancers. Both Ottomans and Allied officers and well-to-do men went frequently to the Garden Bar in Tarlabaşı because of a Russian singer and dancer who was working there. These places turned out to be good investments for some Russians and also provided jobs for many Russian men and women as singers, dancers, waiters, waitresses, cooks, receptionists, and guards.

Besides their contribution to economic life, the Russian refugees brought a new and fresh touch to entertainment in Istanbul. As mentioned in novels like *Sodom and Gomorrah* and newspapers like *the Orient News*, some of these restaurants and bars hosted unusual parties in which Ottoman and Allied officers, bureaucrats, and wealthy men of Istanbul came together and experienced many different kinds of fun, from listening to opera or watching Caucasian dance shows to masquerade and even theater. According to a report of the League of Nations, 300 musicians, 300 actors, and 150 artists lived in Istanbul in April 1921. They contributed greatly to almost every form of the arts there.

Despite all this many refugees were unemployed, steeped in poverty. Of course that situation was not unique to Russians. In general Istanbul was suffering through an economic crisis. Grigory Rakovsky, a Russian refugee who lived in Istanbul for some time in the early 1920s, noted that it was possible to see effects of the global industrial/economic crisis.

Many firms were closing, and the unemployment rate was soaring: "Lacking its own industry and being a hub of distribution of goods, Istanbul was full of various goods that could not be found anywhere else. However, due to the economic crisis, many ships were anchored on the shore, waiting for their load." ⁶⁸ Istanbul also was suffering from high inflation. According to the report of the Immigrant Women Commission, "poverty in the city was horrible, with prices soaring at the rate of 1,400 percent and many people suffering from hunger." ⁶⁹

To survive, some were involved in crime, such as drug dealing, gambling, prostitution, and counterfeiting. As some Turkish sources note, cocaine was introduced to Istanbul by Russian refugees, especially prostitutes from Odessa. Mazhar Osman describes cocaine as "white illness" brought by Wrangel's Army and notes that the elites of Istanbul were addicted to it. To It was used in tekkes in Usküdar as well as some Russian restaurants such as Petrograd. To

Besides dealing in cocaine, some Russian refugees were involved in gambling to earn their living. The most interesting form of gambling that they came up with was flea races. Cockroach, dog, and horse races and rooster fights were also initiated by Russians. 72 Lotto was first introduced by a Russian major. It became so popular that in 1921 there were 428 registered lotto clubs/saloons: "102 of these were in the city, 87 were in suburbs, 106 in Galata, 113 in Pera and Şişli. In those places an average of 12,840 people played lotto for a total of 4,280 hours, and the money bid for 17,120 lottos was 175,000 Turkish liras. These clubs or saloons were usually opened by bankrupt restaurant owners. Disappointed in their earlier investments, these restaurant owners made huge money out of lotto, with a 30 percent profit." The love of Turkish men for gambling became so strong that some Ottoman women petitioned the mayor of the city and complained about how gambling destroyed their families. As a result Ottoman authorities closed all the gambling saloons. Despite this Russians still continued to make money from gambling.⁷⁴

Some Russian women and men were earning money from prostitution.⁷⁵ A source writes that Istanbul had 2,655 Russian prostitutes in 1920.⁷⁶ Another source indicates that the total number of prostitutes in Istanbul during the armistice period was 3,104; of these, 2,125 were registered, while the rest worked illegally. Of the thousands of Russian prostitutes in Istanbul, 171 were registered, working in brothels on Zürafa Sokak and Beyzade Sokak and in Şerbethane, Üsküdar, and Moda. Their visits could cost from fifteen kuruş to seventeen Turkish liras, a broad spectrum of prices.⁷⁷ One source notes the presence of three brothel

quarters in Istanbul, two in Pera, and one in Galata, with a total of four thousand to five thousand prostitutes, registered or illegal. These places offered not only prostitution but also drinking and drugs.⁷⁸

The Allies tried to prevent crimes and establish order in Istanbul through their police forces. An international police bureau was located in Galata, near the Golden Horde. But it was the Allied police rather than the police in this bureau who were in charge of public order. Except for the Americans, all the Allied powers had their own police, who caused both fear and hatred in many citizens of Istanbul.

Every region had a police station. A British police station was called a *krokker* and a French or Italian police station was called a *seks'ton*. British and French police threatened and frightened not only the Turks but also the Russians. They differed from American or Italian police in their use of violence against local people and refugees, in part derived from their spies, usually Turks and Greeks, in the city. Some Russians, mainly aristocrats, worked as spies in the service of the British police and French gendarmerie. Both Turks and Russians felt hatred especially toward the British police.⁷⁹

Russian sources do not mention the Turkish police, as if they did not live in Istanbul at that time. This demonstrates that in the capital of a defeated empire the real hosts at least for the time being were the Allies, especially the British and French.

Similarly, when Russian refugees were involved in an illegal situation such as drug use, prostitution, or robbery, they were tried and punished mainly by the Allied courts and police. According to *Tri Stolitsy Izgnaniia* (Three Capitals of Exile), the legal status of the Russians in the Ottoman lands in the early 1920s was rather limited. Until World War I, based on the Capitulations, legal/criminal cases were heard in consulates' courts. At the beginning of the war the Ottomans annulled the Capitulations, but this was not accepted by the Allies. When the war was over the Allies enforced the Capitulations again. Under the official protection of the Allies, Russian refugees were subject to the Capitulations in the early 1920s.

During this time the major Russian legal authorities in Istanbul were the law department and the court of appeal in the Russian Embassy. The head of the Russian court in the embassy was the only authority over all Russian courts. A criminal court opened in February 1921 was one of them. Crimes such as fraud were tried there. A Russian refugee who committed a crime and was sentenced to imprisonment after trial was put in a Russian prison rather than an Ottoman prison. This, according to

Russian sources, was a fair system because it gave Russians the right to be tried and punished by Russian officials, whose language they understood. The Russian court in the Russian Embassy was in charge of civil cases, such as disputes between landowners and tenants. From January 1921 to July 1923 more than 2,500 such cases were heard in the consular court. 80

Besides the advantage of communicating with people in the court and prison in Russian, being subject to Russian laws or courts had some other advantages. According to Turkish law, the longest term of imprisonment was a few years, while it was only a few months according to Russian laws. This sometimes meant releasing Russians after a few days of imprisonment, so both Ottoman and Allied authorities objected to it, considering the huge number of Russians living in Istanbul and their potential threat to order and security. Hence at the beginning of 1921 the criminal section of the Russian consular court was closed. Even though this caused protest and objections from Russian lawyers and refugees, from that time on all cases involving Russians living in Ottoman lands began to be heard in Italian, French, and British courts. This caused some chaos due to language barriers between the Allied officials, especially Italians, and Russian refugees.⁸¹

In addition to legal difficulties, prisons caused some problems. First, neither the Allies nor the Ottomans were willing to meet the expenses of Russians in prisons. As a result criminals or suspects began to defend themselves and appeal to international institutions or organizations. In one of these pleas the complainant wrote: "For last two months, we were not given any jobs; were not visited by any court official. The only person we saw was an old guard. We had no lights and we were in complete darkness during our four-hour arrest. Also, everywhere was dirt and garbage. We were about to suffocate from the stench, which also made us dizzy." ⁸²

To improve the conditions of Russian refugees in both courts and prisons some Russian institutions and organizations, such as Zemgor and the All-Russian Union of Zemstvos, provided assistance. What Zemgor did for Russian refugees was more like legal consultancy, "because it had no right to defend or represent them in foreign courts. But even this helped the adaptation of Russian refugees to a foreign environment and legal context." Zemgor's consultancy service ended in November 1921, when the Union of Russian Lawyers in Istanbul replaced it. According to a report of the League of Nations, during this time six hundred people were involved in law professionally. By 1922 eighty-five of them had become members of the Union of Russian Lawyers and provided consultancy for Russian refugees either for free or for a small fee. ⁸³ This and

other legal support was important in improving legal conditions for the Russians. The most important factor in this regard, however, was the relations of Russian refugees with the Allies, with the Soviets, and with the Ottoman/Turkish government.

When the French and other Allies gradually stopped providing food for refugees in April to October 1921, the legal status of Russian refugees determined what jobs they could obtain in Turkey and what countries they could go to in order to earn their living if they could not find work in Turkey. Soviet military and intelligence reports on the White Army and immigrants in Turkey show that the French decision to stop aiding the Russian army corps was not only determined by the Red victories against the Whites in general but also by Turkish nationalists' success against the Greeks in Anatolia in September 1921.

The French government, in an accord with Wrangel in November 1920, initially agreed to provide food and accommodation for Russian refugees in military camps and Istanbul in return for what the Russian army had in ships after the evacuation of the Crimea. After it stopped providing food and shelter for the White Army Corps, responsibility for Russian refugees was transferred to a special commission led by the "high commissar for Russian refugees" in the League of Nations, with Dr. Fridtjof Nansen of Norway as its head. Nansen's main duty was to define the legal status of Russian refugees, help them to have identities and thus to travel easily to other countries where they could find jobs, and also ensure their repatriation.⁸⁴

Repatriation had an important place in refugee life. As noted, almost all dreamed about returning to their country, hoping that the Bolshevik regime would collapse. Even though that part of their dream did not come true, many still wished to go back to their country. In fact the Allies and Nansen wanted that too. The Allies, especially the French (who took responsibility for providing food and accommodation based on their agreement with Wrangel), began to propagandize about how good conditions were in the Soviet Union and how Soviet authorities were welcoming returnees. Bored with difficulties and uncertainties in Istanbul as well as in military camps, some 6,000 people returned to the Soviet Union in March 1921. Resid Paşa, an Ottoman ship, began to make regular trips from Istanbul to the Soviet Union in April, carrying refugees. Encouraging Soviet propaganda in hundreds of pamphlets and letters and the works of Soviet agencies in Istanbul played an important role in this. These documents and agencies talked about how the Soviet Union needed refugees to revive its economy and how the Soviet authorities

would issue an amnesty to all who returned. In part as a result of this propaganda, in part due to economic and legal difficulties in the Ottoman Empire, some refugees went back home. When they returned, the Red Army corps met refugees and categorized them in different groups. Based on their physical conditions and past, some were sent to salt reserves and mines to work and some to prisons. Soldiers and officers of the White Army who were in "good standing" were registered in the Red Army and the navy, while those that still had "whiteness" in them were executed. According to *Poslednie Novosti* (Latest News), published in Paris, in July 1921 800 people were executed, including not only officers but also soldiers and some sailors. Due to these executions, some called *Reşid Paşa* a bloody ship.⁸⁵

In the meantime Nansen succeeded in issuing passports that refugees could use to travel or migrate to other countries. By 1923 these passports were approved by thirty-one countries. Even though 25,000 Russians migrated to the United States, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Belgium, and Hungary, many countries were still unwilling to accept Russian refugees due to their huge numbers and their potential contribution to unemployment. Ansen's efforts and refugees' urge to leave Turkey were caused not only by Soviet or French propaganda but also by the attitude of Ottoman and Turkish authorities toward the refugees.

As Russian sources show, Istanbul lost its relative significance in refugee life in 1921 and was replaced by a new parliament and government in Ankara that gained power in 1920. Therefore sources on this period are important for understanding the relations between Moscow and Ankara and their effects on refugees' life and status in Turkey and in terms of understanding how the Ankara government's "nationalizing" policies emerged and worked. The new government in Ankara had good relations with Moscow and therefore was not willing to allow Russian refugees to stay in Turkey. Talks with both the Ottoman government and Ankara on behalf of Russian refugees were held by the representatives of the League of Nations and the Russian Council, established in March 1921 by Wrangel. The main duty of this council was to unite different social and political Russian organizations in exile and to assist refugees in finding jobs, obtaining visas, guarding their legal rights, and so forth. 87 In many countries, however, the major role was played by former Russian diplomats and the representatives of the Provisional Government, established after the March Revolution in 1917. These countries did not officially recognize Wrangel's council and the government.

The Russian Council was dissolved in September 1922. Thereafter the Russian refugees were represented mainly by Nansen, by the Russian Embassy in Istanbul, or by the Refugee Committee established in Paris in 1924, which continued to exist until 1936. The Russian Embassy in Istanbul was primarily concerned about assisting Russian refugees by providing all necessary documents, including papers showing their births and deaths, family records, and papers on inheritance. Legal procedures were carried out in the Russian embassies in Sofia and Istanbul. The Russian Embassy in Istanbul consisted of divisions such as the diplomatic mission, consular department, the bureau of relations with the Allied commanders, refugee affairs, passport sections for the members of the Russian army and navy, and the main section of Russian Orthodox Church. 88

All of these institutions were in contact with the Ottoman and Turkish officials in Istanbul and Ankara from the spring of 1921 on. For instance, on May 8, 1921, the representative of the Russian Council, professor I. P. Alexinsky, met with Tevfik Paşa, the grand vezir of the Ottoman government in Istanbul, to ask for legal and political assistance for Russian refugees who were no longer supported by the Allies and were struggling both economically and legally. Zarnitsy (Lightning), a Russian journal published first in Istanbul and later in Sofia, noted that during this meeting Professor Alexinsky asked Tevfik Paşa if his government could allow Russians to work in Ottoman lands, referring to the limits that the Ankara government put on the employment of foreigners in Turkish workplaces. In response Tevfik Paşa told Professor Alexinsky that the Ottoman government was not in a position to help Russian refugees even if it wanted to, because "the agricultural fields were mainly in Anatolia and the Ottoman government had no control over them."89 This meeting showed that the real authority in Turkey was Ankara, especially from the spring of 1921 on.

Many Russian sources confirm this. The Russian press and refugees were deeply concerned about close relations between Ankara and Moscow. They were even alarmed by possible Soviet military assistance to Ankara in its fight against the Allies and the Greeks. *Zarnitsy* was one of the Russian sources that underlined this possibility. Based on the news received from Batum it wrote on July 3, 1921, that the Soviets had an army of 160,000 soldiers in Georgia and Armenia, close to the Turkish border, and were ready to send it to Ankara to help the nationalists against the Greeks and other occupiers. Even though this possibility did not turn into a reality, the Soviets sent eight field guns, six other guns, 15,000 various rifles, 15 billion bullets, many weapons and manufactured goods, and unprocessed leather on a ship called *Ak-Deniz* that sailed from the Black Sea ports of the Soviet Union to Trabzon. ⁹⁰ They also sent to Ankara warships, 150 thousand rubles in 1921, and 10 billion rubles in 1922.

This generous Soviet assistance to the Turkish government and the earlier treaty of friendship and neutrality signed between these two parties in March 1921 alarmed not only the Russian refugees but also the Allies. They thought that in a delicate situation like this it was risky to leave members of the Russian army in military camps with no Allied assistance at all, because some could join Kemal's army against the Greeks. To prevent this the Allies decided to turn military personnel into civilians and continue to help them with food and jobs. ⁹¹ After this many Russian officers and soldiers became civilians and either continued to live on food allowances that they received from the French or went to Istanbul and European cities to earn their living.

Despite its close relations with Moscow the Ankara government, which had already succeeded in cancelling the Capitulations in July 1923 with the Treaty of Lausanne, did not take any definite steps against the Russian refugees and other foreigners in Turkey. But beginning in 1925, when (according to many Russian sources) the Ankara government was disappointed in the Allies' attitude toward the rebellion of Sheikh Said, Ankara took many measures limiting the legal status of refugees and "foreigners." First, it allowed only one-way exit visas and canceled dual entry visas. It also banned the Russians as well as refugees of other nationalities from working as lawyers, doctors, and other professionals. Finally, it announced that by August 1, 1927, all Russians and foreigners in Turkey had to apply for Turkish citizenship or leave the country. Even though representatives of Russian institutions and organizations tried to contact the Ankara government and ask Turkish officials to cancel these latest decisions, their efforts proved fruitless. According to a report of the Russian Red Cross, by April 1926 only four thousand to five thousand Russians were in Turkey: 90 percent of these were living in Istanbul, while the rest were dispersed in different Anatolian cities. In 1927 the number of Russian refugees in Turkey dropped to 3,519 and in 1929-30 to 1,400. Most of them were either veterans or older Russians who were not in a position to work.92

Thus the story of Russian refugees began with the Russian Civil War and ended with the Turkish War of Independence. When the Russians arrived in Istanbul in the early 1920s, the Ottoman capital was under Allied occupation and control. The frequent references to the Allies and lack of mention of the Ottomans serve as evidence of this. The same sources, however, stress that even though Istanbul was under Allied occupation and control the nationalist government in Ankara (often referred to as the Kemalist government) began to have a say in what the country's

future would be and what policies it would pursue in regard to the Capitulations, foreigners, and other subjects. If Kemalists did not win the war against the Greeks, they implied, Russian refugees would continue to live in Turkey like many other nationalities. The Russian refugees were on the losing side both during the Russian Civil War and during the Turkish War of Independence War, however, so the refugees ended up losing too.

In the early 1920s the Russians' Istanbul was the last capital of an ending empire. Therefore, as explained vividly in Russian sources and memoirs, it had two faces. On one side it was full of misery and poverty, hosting thousands of refugees and struggling with high rates of inflation and unemployment. On the other side it was full of energy, wealth, and joy. The first side expressed itself in diseases, undernourished people, lack of hygiene, and overcrowded civilian and military camps, while the other side appeared in masquerades, masked balls, and fancy restaurants and bars. The Russian refugees were part of both the poverty and misery and the wealth and joy, for they contributed to both in Istanbul.

NOTES

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- 81. Zarnitsy 22 (September 11, 1921); Ippolitov, Nedbayevsky, and Rudentsova, *Tri Stolitsy Izgnaniia*, 24.
- 82. Ippolitov, Nedbayevsky, and Rudentsova, Tri Stolitsy Izgnaniia, 23-24.
- 83. Yovanovich, Russkaia Emigratsiia na Balkanakh, 294.
- 84. John A. Hutchins, "The Wrangel Refugees: A Study of General Baron Peter N. Wrangel's Defeated White Russian Forces, Both Military and Civilian," in *Exile* (Louisville: University of Louisville, 1972), 38.
- 85. Ippolitov, Nedbayevsky, and Rudentsova, Tri Stolitsy Izgnaniia, 32–35.
- 86. Ibid., 32.
- 87. For more information on the Russian Council, see Yovanovich, *Russkaia Emigratsiia na Balkanakh*, 280–90.
- 88. Ibid
- 89. Zarnitsy 10 (May 23, 1921): 26.
- 90. Zarnitsy 14 (July 3, 1921): 20.
- 91. Erol Mütercimler, *Kurtuluş Savaşına Denizden Gelen Destek: Sovyetler Birliği'nden Alınan Yardımlar, Kuva-yı Milliye Donanması* (Istanbul: Yaprak Yayınları, 1992), 275–77; Ippolitov, Nedbayevsky, and Rudentsova, *Tri Stolitsy Izgnaniia*, 29.
- 92. RGVIA, f. 1385, op. 1, d. 109; GARF, f. 5764, op. 15, d. 1, list 48; GARF, f. 5764, op. 1, d. 142, list 20-206, as cited in E. P. Serapionova, *Rossiskaia Emigratsiia v Chekhoslovatskoi Respublike, 20-30e gody* (Moscow: Institut Slavianovedeniia i Balkanistiki RAN, 1995), 18; Yovanovich, *Russkaia Emigratsiia na Balkanakh*, 121-22.

The Ottoman Question at the Paris Peace Conference (1919–1920)

Francesco Caccamo

The story of the breakup of the Ottoman Empire, the debates concerning the fate of its lands and its peoples at the Paris Peace Conference, and the process leading to the signature of the Treaty of Sèvres has already been told several times. Since the aftermath of the Peace Conference, witnesses and historians have provided their descriptions of these events, gradually introducing new sources, new interpretations, and new approaches. Some have concentrated on the decision process taking place in Paris, others on the developments in Turkey. Some have tried to provide a justification for the leaders assembled in the French capital, while others have displayed more open criticism. The present chapter does not attempt to add substantial new elements to such previous works. Within a reflection on the Ottoman Empire during World War I, it simply aims to reexamine the discussions that animated the Peace Conference, concentrating on the issues of Constantinople/Istanbul, Thrace, and Anatolia and using primarily the official proceedings of the conference. Even such a limited perspective, however, reveals the singular mixture of realpolitik and Orientalist discourse that affected all the major leaders of the victorious coalition in various proportions, leading to the disastrous outcome of Sèvres but eventually paving the road for the birth of a new Turkey.

ON THE EVE OF THE PEACE CONFERENCE

At the end of World War I the fate of the Ottoman Empire was certainly one of the most crucial issues confronting the great victorious powers. During the conflict the members of the Entente had negotiated a series of agreements concerning not only the peripheral territories of the empire

but also its Anatolian core and the fundamental region of Istanbul and the Straits. At the same time they had committed themselves in various degrees to the local elements that claimed a share of the Ottoman possessions, from the Arabs to the Jews, from the Greeks to the Armenians. The United States, the last member of the victorious coalition to enter the conflict and the only one not to declare war on the Porte, did not feel bound by these agreements and commitments. With the Fourteen Points of January 1918, President Woodrow Wilson had expressed himself in favor of "secure sovereignty" for the Turkish portions of the Ottoman Empire and "an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development" for the populations under Turkish rule. Such formulas seemed to reflect the American president's support for the right of self-determination and for the principle of nationality but in reality could justify a wide array of interpretations.²

This multitude of agreements, promises, and statements did not reflect a common strategy or line of conduct and in many cases contained contradictions. One thing, however, was certain: by the end of the war the Great Powers were strongly prejudiced against the Ottoman Empire and the Turks. Traditional criticism had developed into open hostility, not only because of the massacres perpetrated by the regime of the Young Turks against the Armenians but also due to war propaganda and a feeling of superiority toward a defeated enemy. In general the representatives of the Allied and Associated Powers shared the idea that the Ottoman Empire had exhausted its historical mission, if it ever had one. They were convinced that the Turks would no longer have any place in Europe and were skeptical even about the possibility of preserving an independent Turkish entity beyond the Straits. Clear evidence of this negative disposition was the abrupt abandonment of the term "Ottoman Empire" in official and unofficial documents, despite the continuing presence of the Sultan Mehmed VI and his government in Constantinople. Not by chance, on the eve of the opening of the Peace Conference, this term was already being replaced by others, such as "Turkey" (intended as a geographical rather than a political entity) or, even better, "Turkish territories" and "Asia Minor."

Symptomatically, the original French proposals for the planning of the Peace Conference contemplated "a complete reorganization" of the Ottoman territories and refused any commitment to the survival of a Turkish state, "a rule which for a century has perpetrated its abuses, crimes, and causes of discussion among the great civilized states." Wilson, during the first exchanges of opinion upon his arrival to Europe,

expressed himself "in favor of the Turks being cleared out of Europe altogether" and "their place in Constantinople being taken by some small Power acting as a mandatory of the League of Nations." The British tended to agree; they were convinced that the ideal solution would be an American mandate over Constantinople or Armenia or possibly both. Also weighing in were the Italians, often credited with being the most Turcophile members of the victorious coalition. The Italians were generally cautious toward the Ottoman settlement; they were heavily focused on their claims in the Adriatic Sea and perceived that their own weaknesses did not recommend risky initiatives in the territories of the Ottoman Empire. Faced with the possibility of a complete breakup of the empire at the hands of the other European powers and of the Greeks, however, they were determined to preserve what they called "the Mediterranean balance of power"—in other words to obtain a sphere of influence in southern and western Anatolia, as negotiated with the Entente in the Pact of London in 1915 and in the Agreements of S. Giovanni di Moriana in 1917.⁵

THE OTTOMAN QUESTION DURING THE SIX MONTHS THAT CHANGED THE WORLD

It is generally claimed that at the beginning of the Paris Peace Conference in January 1919 the Great Powers did not focus their attention on the Ottoman settlement. This is true to a certain degree. Certainly the victors had other priorities, such as the creation of the League of Nations, the containment of the Bolshevik Revolution, the Adriatic question, and, above all, the conclusion of the peace with Germany, the main member of the defeated coalition. There was growing consensus, however, on the opportunity to deal with Ottoman territories through the system of mandates: recognizing the independence of certain portions of the empire, while temporarily entrusting their administration to a mandatory power in the name of the League of Nations. This system seemed apt to reconcile the traditional colonial ambitions of the European powers with the more idealistic aspirations of Wilson. It was meant to provide a justification for a partition of the Arab provinces between the British and the French, but many envisaged the possibility of its further implementation in Constantinople and in the Turkish heartland.

With this scheme in mind, at the end of January 1919 the British premier David Lloyd George suggested the creation of mandates for some Ottoman territories in the highest organ of the conference, the Supreme Council (or, as it was then called, the Council of Ten). Lloyd George claimed that this system would not be implemented in Anatolia but envisaged an exception for one or more U.S. mandates in delicate areas such as Constantinople and its environs, Armenia, or even the whole of Anatolia. This manifest attempt to satisfy the British ambitions in the eastern Mediterranean and in the Middle East with the cooperation of the United States was not altogether rejected but met with a series of objections. Wilson did not refuse to consider a U.S. mandate but specified that he needed time to convince the American public of the opportunity of direct involvement in the Ottoman Empire. French premier Georges Clemenceau noted his opposition to the possibility that the Ottoman settlement might take precedence over the German peace treaty. The Italian president of the Council, Vittorio Emanuele Orlando, asked how the mandates would be assigned. This was an implicit warning that if the other powers were to obtain a share of the Ottoman Empire in the form of mandates Italy expected its claims on southern and western Anatolia to be taken into consideration. Faced with these difficulties, the Council of Ten gave a general approval to the idea of the mandates but for the moment decided to implement only military occupations—a dangerous decision, as the following events were to demonstrate.⁶

Soon after Lloyd George's attempt, the Ottoman question was raised again by the Greek president of the council, Eleftherios Venizelos. During his presentation of the Greek claims in front of the Supreme Council, Venizelos fully exploited the anti-Turkish and pro-Hellenic mood then prevailing in Paris: "[I]n the general interest of the world, the Turkish government together with the Sultan, should be made to leave Constantinople.... For the future security of the world, a small Turkish state with its own Capital should be constituted in Asia." With apparent magnanimity, Venizelos abstained from asking for Constantinople, although he claimed that its population was predominantly Greek and agreed with Lloyd George that the great city and its environs should be internationalized. The Greek premier asked for the whole of Thrace, however: both the western part, which had been ceded to Bulgaria after the Balkan Wars of 1912-13, and the eastern part, which was still under Ottoman sovereignty. Moreover, he claimed western Anatolia with the port of İzmir/ Smyrna. All of these claims were supported by dubious data, aimed at proving the prevalence of Greek Orthodox Christians over Turkish Muslims (and, in the case of Thrace, over the Bulgarians as well) and the correspondence of the Greek aspirations with the principle of nationality and the right of self-determination.⁷

Following Venizelos's intervention, the Council of Ten delivered the task of examining the Greek requests to a technical organ, the Committee for Greek Affairs. The idea of solving intricate territorial problems through the evaluations of true or alleged experts soon turned out to be overly optimistic. From the beginning of its work the committee split along the line of purely political considerations. The English and French experts fully supported the Greek claims over Eastern Thrace and western Anatolia, giving credit to the data provided by Venizelos. The Americans agreed about Thrace but had reservations about Greek statistics for Smyrna and Anatolia. The Italians stood for any solution opposed to Greek control of Thrace, defending the interests of the Bulgarians but also stressing the necessity not to leave Constantinople without an adequate hinterland. At the same time they refused to take part in the discussions over Anatolia, pointing out that the experts could not ignore the agreements over the region negotiated by the Entente during the war. Further problems emerged when the conclusions of the Committee for Greek Affairs were scrutinized by a Central Committee for Territorial Questions. While the English, French, and Italian experts confirmed their respective opinions, the Americans changed their mind and objected to the separation of Eastern Thrace from Constantinople. As they had come to realize, the loss of this region would create serious problems for the United States if it received a mandate over the great city.8

While the experts were caught in this quagmire, other problems emerged. First, the idea of an American mandate in Constantinople, in Armenia, or in the whole of Anatolia turned out to be much more difficult to implement than originally envisioned.9 During his trip back to the United States between February and March 1919, Wilson actively campaigned to convince his compatriots about the opportunity of American involvement in Asia Minor. It is not without interest to remember some of his statements on the subject: "That is a part of the world where already American influence extends—a saving influence and an educating and uplifting influence." As far as Armenia was concerned, he declared: "I am not without hope that the people of the United States would find it acceptable to go in and be the trustees of the interests of the Armenian people and see to it that the unspeakable Turk and the almost equally difficult Kurd had their necks sat on long enough to teach them manners and give the industrious and earnest people of Armenia time to develop a country which is naturally rich with possibilities." At least as important to Wilson was American commitment in such a delicate area as Constantinople and the Straits: "America is the only nation in the world that can

undertake that mandate and have the rest of the world believe that it is undertaken in good faith, that we do not mean to stay there and set up our own sovereignty." In general, an American mandate for Armenia and Constantinople was meant to be "a work of disinterested philanthropy." Despite such warm praise, the response of the American public was cold. Wilson was not discouraged, but he realized that he would need more time to change his compatriots' inclinations. The American inability to make a decision about the status of Constantinople and the Straits had important consequences, delaying the whole decision process concerning the Ottoman Empire.

The other problem was represented by the gradual extension of military occupation in Anatolia. The Italians in particular were becoming impatient about sending their troops to southern and western Anatolia. Since the end of the war they had accepted the increase of British and French forces in Constantinople, while they were allowed to participate only with a small detachment. After the envoy of French units in the centers of Mersina/Mersin and Adana in Cilicia in December 1918, they became more insistent. For some months they waited in vain for an authorization by the Allied military command for Asia Minor, but at the end of March 1919 they decided unilaterally to send troops to the southern Anatolian port of Adalia/Antalya under the excuse of local incidents. In the meantime the Italians carefully followed the multiple signals showing that the Greeks were organizing a military operation against Smyrna, which, according the agreements of S. Giovanni di Moriana, was part of the Italian sphere of interest. Faced with this threat, they prepared for further landings on the southwestern Anatolian coast in Scalanova/ Kuşadasi, Kuluk, Budrum/Bodrum, Marmaritza/Marmaris, and Makri/ Fethiye. They also established contacts with local Turkish elements, encouraging them to resist Greek initiatives.¹²

Italian unrest was increased by circumstances that apparently were not connected with the Ottoman settlement: the lack of progress concerning Italian claims on the eastern shore of the Adriatic and especially on the city of Fiume/Rijeka.¹³ When the Council of Four started to examine the Adriatic question in April, the Italians found themselves confronted with Wilson's open support for the Yugoslavs. In order to avert a crisis Lloyd George and Clemenceau suggested compensating the Italians for the sacrifices in the Adriatic advocated by Wilson by giving them a mandate in southern Anatolia. The American president, however, was against "paying the Italians for something they had no right to." During all these talks nobody paid real attention to the desires of the Turks, who

were simply the object of instrumental and derogatory comments. In order to oppose an Italian mandate Wilson observed that "the trouble was that the Turks could not govern anyone," while Lloyd George replied that, on the contrary, they were "quite a docile people except towards Armenians and those whom they did not like."14

The debate on the Adriatic degenerated into an open crisis at the end of April. Faced with Wilson's decision to address a manifesto to the Italian people while bypassing its official representatives, the Italian delegation temporarily abandoned the Peace Conference and went back to Rome. Under such unprecedented circumstances the mood in the Supreme Council soon turned strongly anti-Italian. On May 5, 1919, Wilson reported that the Italians had violently repressed Greek demonstrations in the Dodecanese. Lloyd George followed suit, denouncing in dramatic terms the Italian initiatives in Anatolia and the landing of troops in Adalia: "the Italian movements in the East were highly suspicious.... They were the only nation not demobilising.... Any day it might be found that the Italians had captured Anatolia and it would be difficult to get them out once they had occupied it." After having prepared the ground in this way, the British premier launched the proposal to authorize a Greek landing in Smyrna. To make his case stronger, he also spoke of the danger—nonexistent at the time—of Turkish attacks against the Anatolian Greeks: "the Greeks should be allowed to occupy Smyrna, since their compatriots were actually being massacred at the present time and there was no one to help them." ¹⁵ The following day Lloyd George insisted on a decision for Anatolia to prevent further Italian initiatives. It was time to allow Venizelos to send two or three divisions to Smyrna in order to protect his compatriots. In the heat of the moment both Clemenceau and Wilson gave their approval to this fateful provision, which would become the catalyst for the emergence of a national resistance movement of extraordinary amplitude.¹⁶

The Greeks took control of the forts protecting Smyrna on May 14 and occupied the city the following day. Their arrival brought a sharp rise of tension, with the killing of hundreds of Turks, the penetration of the Greek forces inland, and the beginning of the Turkish resistance under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal.¹⁷ Despite these dramatic developments the attention of the Supreme Council remained concentrated on the Italian reaction. The Italian delegation had resumed its place at the Peace Conference on May 7, but the decisions concerning Smyrna were communicated to them only five days afterward. At first the British and the French could not hide some embarrassment. After having met privately with Orlando, Lloyd George spoke in favor of an Italian mandate in southern Anatolia. He stressed the frustration of the Italians at being excluded from the system of the mandates and remarked that some concessions could induce them to be more amenable to compromise on the Adriatic question. Lloyd George remembered the positive example provided by the Roman Empire in administering alien peoples and expressed appreciation for the qualities exhibited by the Italians during World War I. According to him, all of this justified an Italian mandate for southern Anatolia:

He was not proposing that Italy should be offered a mandate for the whole of Anatolia, but why, he asked, should they not be invited to police, and develop a part of Anatolia, where they would find a country not dissimilar from their own.... He was told that before the war, Italian emigration had been as great as 800,000 to 900,000 a year. Why should these not be diverted to Turkey, which had not the population to develop Anatolia.¹⁸

Wilson was not completely convinced. Irritated with the Italians for the Adriatic crisis, all at once he became the staunchest supporter of Greek claims in Anatolia. In his opinion the priority was that Greece receive direct sovereignty over Smyrna and the surrounding territory, a mandate for the rest of western Anatolia, and the islands of the Dodecanese. Moreover, he insisted that the line of division between the Greek and Italian spheres of influence in Anatolia should benefit the Greeks. As he explained, "the Greeks had hitherto never been taken, as it were, into the family of nations. He thought that if they were given what Venizelos had claimed...a new spirit would be put into the Greek nation. He felt that under leaders such as Venizelos, they might make a success. It was, he thought, true of nations as of men, that when given a big job, they would rise to the occasion." After this Hellenophile tirade, Wilson expressed the belief that a foreign presence would not be a problem for the Turks: "[P]eople who knew the Turks well said that the body of the population were really docile people. They were all right so long as they were not put in authority. Under the guidance of a friendly power, they might prove a docile people."19

Following this discussion the British experts drafted a set of proposals with the aim of reaching an agreement with the Italians. In reality these proposals provided an outline for the whole peace treaty with Turkey.

The main points were (1) the end of Turkish sovereignty over Constantinople, the Straits, and Eastern Thrace; (2) Smyrna, the surrounding territory, and the Dodecanese under Greek sovereignty; (3) the rest of Anatolia as part of a future Turkish state but with a Greek mandate in western Anatolia, an Italian mandate in southern Anatolia, and possibly a French mandate in the remaining parts of the region. During the following discussions the representatives of the Great Powers added further provisions, specifying that the Americans would receive two mandates: the "province of Armenia" and Constantinople and the Straits. They also ventured into the internal organization of the future Turkish state. Lloyd George believed that the sultan should be entitled to remain in Constantinople and supervise the administration of the whole of Turkey by the mandatory powers, "while the United States overlooked the Sultan." A Turkish governor was to be elected, according to Wilson, or to be appointed among the members of the imperial family, according to Clemenceau.20

All of these projects were suddenly shattered by the news of Italian landings in Scalanova and other localities in southern Anatolia. The Italians had decided on this operation at the beginning of May, when they had gathered evidence that the Greeks were to occupy Smyrna. Their intervention was clearly aimed at containing Greek expansion in what they considered their sphere of influence. For the other Great Powers the Italian move was tantamount to a direct challenge. Wilson, Lloyd George, and Clemenceau not only presented the Italian delegation with an extremely harsh protest but also reconsidered the whole Turkish settlement.²¹ In a few days several new schemes were discussed. British foreign minister Arthur Balfour supported the creation of a single Turkish state in Anatolia, with Brussa/Bursa or Konia/Konya as capital.²² Wilson expressed his support for a French mandate over most of Anatolia, "to give—as he said—a mandate to France without calling it a mandate."23 Lloyd George was inclined toward a single American mandate, because "the United States of America would be more acceptable to the Mohammedan world than any other party.... America was known to have a very great respect for liberty and would consequently be expected to be very fair."24 Orlando tried to reenter the diplomatic game by asking for an Italian mandate for the whole of Anatolia but had no problems in admitting that he would gladly give up all of his claims in Asia Minor if only he could obtain Fiume on the Adriatic.²⁵ More coherently, Italian foreign minister Sidney Sonnino recalled the promises made to Italy during the war and stressed that all his country was looking for was an amiable solution, a compromise including both the Adriatic and the Turkish settlement.²⁶

To add further problems, at the beginning of June the Great Powers accepted the request of the grand vezir (and the sultan's son-in-law), Damat Ferit Paşa, to come to Paris to present the Ottoman case. The decision to concede a hearing to the Ottoman delegation was meant as a demonstration of goodwill, at least compared to the rigid stance displayed vis-à-vis the Germans.²⁷ This conciliatory mood came to an end, however, when Damat Ferit rather naïvely asked for the complete integrity of the Ottoman Empire on June 16 and refused any responsibility for the war policies of the Committee for Union and Progress.²⁸ In their written reply the members of the Supreme Council rejected the attempt to blame the CUP exclusively, because "every nation must be judged by the Government which rules it." Above all they sharply denied the historical role of the Ottoman Empire and its past achievements:

[T]here is no case to be found, either in Europe or Asia or Africa, in which the establishment of Ottoman rule in any country has not been followed by the diminution of its material prosperity, and a fall in its level of culture; nor there is any case to be found in which the withdrawal of Ottoman rule has not been followed by a growth in material prosperity and a rise in the level of culture. Neither among the Christians of Europe, nor among the Moslems of Syria, Arabia and Africa has the Ottoman Turk done other than destroy what he has conquered; never has he shown himself able to develop in peace what he has won by war.²⁹

At the end of June, on the eve of the momentous event represented by the signature of the peace with Germany, the Big Three made a last attempt to take the Ottoman settlement into consideration. The issue was raised by Lloyd George, who believed it necessary to negotiate the peace terms in order to "put Turkey out of her misery," while reserving for the future the final decision about one or more American mandates. Wilson fully agreed. For him the Peace Conference should "cut off all that Turkey was to give up; and to oblige Turkey to accept any conditions with regard to over-sight or direction which the Allied and Associated Governments might agree to." By now the American president was absolutely determined that the sultan and his government should abandon Constantinople: "He had studied the question of the Turks in Europe

for a long time, and every year confirmed his opinion they ought to be cleared out."30

After a more careful analysis, however, the representatives of the Great Powers could not hide some doubts. As Clemenceau stressed, no Ottoman delegation would accept the loss of Constantinople. Moreover, it would be premature to consider such a possibility without knowing whether the Americans would take a mandate on the great city. Other problems were raised by the Greek and Italian military presence in Anatolia. In the end the only issue that could be agreed upon was to send Damat Ferit and his delegation back to Constantinople. On this point Wilson was resolute: "They had exhibited complete absence of common sense and a total misunderstanding of the West. They had imagined that the Conference knew no history and was ready to swallow enormous falsehoods." Lloyd George added sarcastically that "this was Turkish diplomacy."31 Under these circumstances, on June 28 (the day of the signature of the Treaty of Versailles) the Supreme Council laconically communicated to the Ottoman delegation that it was of no use to prolong its stay in Paris, because there would be an unavoidable delay in the preparation of the Turkish peace.³²

INTERMISSION

In the aftermath of the signature of the Treaty of Versailles the Peace Conference underwent a partial downsizing. After their prolonged permanence in Paris the highest representatives of the victorious powers had to go back to their countries in order to deal with internal problems and to build consensus to their foreign policy. The Council of Four was subsequently replaced by a less authoritative Council of the Heads of Delegation, where the powers were usually represented by their foreign ministries. This transformation had deep repercussions for the Ottoman question. The most important aspect was the departure of President Wilson from Paris. As noted, during the previous months Wilson had unexpectedly become an even more vocal critic of the Ottoman Empire and of the Turks than Lloyd George. In the same context he had shown his willingness to accept a fundamental share in the Ottoman settlement in the form of American mandates over Constantinople and Armenia, if not over the whole of Anatolia. But now Wilson's growing difficulties in American politics, his problems in obtaining the ratification of the Versailles Treaty by the American Senate, and, not least, his deteriorating health conditions raised a series of doubts about his capacity to keep

his promises. In mid-July Wilson had to ask the Council of the Heads of Delegation to postpone the preparation of the Ottoman peace treaty, foreseeing a substantial delay in the American decision concerning the mandates.³³ Two months later the American representative in the council, undersecretary of state Frank L. Polk, announced a resolution by mid-October, although nothing had happened by the expiration of this deadline.³⁴ In the meantime the United States was proving unable to keep its commitments in Armenia. Following an American initiative the Peace Conference approved sending a high commissioner to the troubled region. In recognition of American interests, the choice fell on an American officer, Col. William Haskell.³⁵ When Haskell arrived at his destination and requested military assistance to restore order, however, Polk had to admit that the United States could not do anything for Armenia at the moment.³⁶

Other new developments concerned Italy. The Orlando government fell a few days before the signature of the Versailles Treaty and was replaced by a cabinet led by Francesco Saverio Nitti. The new foreign minister and head of the Italian delegation to Paris, Tommaso Tittoni, wanted quickly to put an end to the polemics that in the previous months had opposed his country to the other Great Powers. As part of this strategy Tittoni opened negotiations with Venizelos as soon as he arrived in the French capital. In mid-July the two agreed to a demarcation line of the Greek and Italian occupation zones in southwestern Anatolia. By the end of the month Tittoni and Venizelos had gone further, with an exchange of notes that committed Italy and Greece to coordinate their respective policies at the Peace Conference. As far as the eastern Mediterranean was concerned, Italy was to support Greece in Thrace and renounce the Dodecanese; in Anatolia it would give up claims on Smyrna and most of the western part of the region, while retaining the southern part up to Scalanova and the river Meander/Menderes. The Italians soon realized, however, that the Tittoni-Venizelos agreement had very limited effects on their overall position in Paris. The French and especially the British favored these efforts, but Wilson was angered by what he considered a new expression of the European and Italian tendency to undertake secret diplomacy to attain imperialist goals. Even from the other side of the Atlantic the American president did not fail to show his irritation, opposing any initiative that could improve the chances of success of the Italian claims both in the Adriatic and in the eastern Mediterranean. In this context the Italians rapidly lost interest in the pro-Greek policy represented by the Tittoni-Venizelos agreement. After a few months Tittoni

himself resigned, while Italy undertook a course more favorable to the Turks. In this evolution a relevant role was played by the Italian undersecretary of state, Carlo Sforza, who had been Italian high commissar to Constantinople until the summer of 1919 and had come to understand Turkish reality better than many other diplomats.³⁷

In the meantime the Peace Conference perceived the first doubts about the Greek expedition to Smyrna and its environs. Turkish unrest was quickly spreading, and the movement of nationalist resistance consolidated. In July the British put pressure on the sultan and forced him to dismiss Mustafa Kemal from the head of the Inspectorate of the 3rd Army, but Kemal's prestige kept growing. When the seyhülislam protested against the atrocities committed by the Greeks in the aftermath of their landing in Smyrna, the Council of the Heads of Delegations decided to create a specific Commission of Investigation.³⁸ The commission arrived in the Anatolian port in the second half of August, stayed in the area under Greek occupation for two months, interrogated hundreds of witnesses, and in November submitted its report to the Peace Conference. The document was strongly critical of the Greeks, who were blamed for having been unable to control the situation in Smyrna and having penetrated inland without authorization, causing the Turkish reaction. According to the commission, the only remedy was the partial or total withdrawal of the Greek troops, their replacement by Allied forces, and the restoration of the local Turkish administration. Moreover, during the hearing in front of the Council of the Heads of Delegation, the French member of the commission, General Georges Bunoust, stressed the strength reached by the "Nationalist Movement." On the same occasion the name of Mustafa Kemal was pronounced for the first time in front of the highest organ of the Peace Conference.³⁹ In the end Venizelos and his British supporters managed to avoid the implementation of the measures recommended by the commission.⁴⁰ By then, however, the Turkish resistance was scoring substantial successes in Thrace and Anatolia, while the Entente-favoring grand vezir Damat Ferit Pasa resigned and was replaced by the more independent Ali Rıza Paşa. The popularity of the nationalist cause was further proved by the December elections, which returned to the Ottoman parliament a majority of deputies close to the nationalists, including Mustafa Kemal himself.41

Under the influence of these multiple changes, by late fall 1919 the European powers were feeling less and less at ease with the Turkish settlement. The only question on which some progress seemed possible was Thrace, whose fate was discussed in connection with the Bulgarian peace treaty. Still under the influence of the Tittoni-Venizelos agreements, the Italians abandoned the reservations expressed in the previous months against the Greeks on both Western and Eastern Thrace and aligned themselves with the English and the French. The attribution of the whole region to Athens, however, was vetoed by the Americans. Wilson, irritated by the Italian-Greek secret agreement and still believing in the feasibility of an American mandate, contradicted his own delegates and insisted that Thrace should become part of the new international state of Constantinople. Hence no final settlement was reached. The Treaty of Neuilly simply authorized the occupation of Western Thrace by Allied forces with Greek participation.⁴²

In order to overcome this prolonged stalemate, in the final months of 1919 the British and the French examined the Ottoman question in a series of bilateral meetings.⁴³ During the visit of a high-level French delegation to London in mid-December Clemenceau and Lloyd George recognized that it was impossible to rely anymore on American involvement in Asia Minor. From this perspective they abandoned the idea of establishing mandates in Asia Minor. The scheme that for almost a year had dominated the discussions concerning the Turkish territories was suddenly dropped (obviously the Arab portions of the Ottoman Empire were a different matter, because there the British and the French did not have any intention on giving up mandates of their own). Clemenceau and Lloyd George also agreed to the establishment of some form of international control under Anglo-French leadership for the fundamental region of the Straits, but with serious points of dissension. The most important was certainly the fate of Constantinople. Clemenceau supported the preservation of formal Turkish sovereignty over the great city, but Lloyd George was convinced of the necessity of putting an end to the Turkish presence forever. As a compromise the British premier was willing to consider the establishment of the sultan "in a sort of Vatican at Constantinople" (as he explained, "We might say to him: 'Brusa is your capital, but you can have Yıldız Kiosk as a residence and as the religious centre of Islam'"). This so-called Vatican proposal, however, did not convince Clemenceau, who did not want "the creation of a new Pope in the East," and was opposed even by Lord George Curzon, who had recently taken the helm of the Foreign Office. Similarly, Clemenceau proposed the recognition of some special status for the Greeks in Smyrna and the surrounding region, while his British colleague asked for their outright union with Athens. Other pending issues were the Italian position in southern Anatolia, the French claims on Cilicia, and the future of Armenia.44

The continuation of these talks was left to Curzon and Philippe Berthelot, the influential director of the department for political and commercial affairs of the Quai d'Orsay. At this level a solution seemed rapidly at hand. From the outset Berthelot declared that Clemenceau preferred to avoid the complete expulsion of the Turks from Constantinople but would abide by the desires of the British in homage to their superior interests in the Ottoman settlement. This demonstration of solidarity opened the door for an agreement envisaging the creation of a small international state in the area of Constantinople and the Straits, which would be put under the protection of the League of Nations and would be submitted to Allied military occupation. Turkey was to be reduced to Anatolia, with the sultan establishing his capital in Brussa or Konia and his government being kept under Allied control through financial means. The Greeks were to receive all of Thrace up to the Enos/ Enez-Midia/Midye line and a preponderant representation in Smyrna, although under formal Turkish sovereignty. The Italians would have to abandon southern Anatolia, receiving in exchange special economic concessions in the region. Cilicia would remain under French influence. Finally, Armenia was to be recognized as an independent state, which would include the vilayet of Erzurum.⁴⁵

The Anglo-French conversations represented a substantial step in the direction of the peace treaty with Turkey, but they were not altogether decisive. Immediately afterward at least three events created new complications. First, Lloyd George and Curzon were put in a minority within the British cabinet by the viceroy for India, Lord Edwin Samuel Montagu, and other colleagues, who contested the idea of expelling the Turks from Constantinople. 46 Second, in France the Clemenceau government fell and was replaced by a new cabinet led by Alexandre Millerand, who proved to be less acquiescent toward the most extreme British demands concerning Asia Minor. 47 Last but not least the Italians were uneasy about the rumors of the Anglo-French conversations. Nitti was not only frustrated by the scarce consideration showed by the Allies toward the Italian claims but also doubted the opportuneness of the punitive policy envisaged at the Peace Conference against the members of the defeated coalition. When the Supreme Council briefly met in Paris in January 1920, Nitti preferred not raise the Turkish question and instead focused on the Adriatic settlement. In a private conversation, however, he expressed his concerns to Lloyd George and tried to dissuade him from imposing excessively harsh solutions upon the Turks. He was especially worried by Constantinople, where he thought the Allies should avoid challenging the political and religious authority of the sultan-caliph by

demanding his expulsion from the city. As he admonished, "If we go against the Sultan, if we send the Caliph away from Constantinople, we will raise the whole [of] Islam." This intervention, however, had no effect. In his reply Lloyd George did not go beyond generic expressions of goodwill. Above all, he kept stressing his support for Venizelos, calling him without hesitation "the most democratic statesman in the Balkans." 48

Despite these differences of opinion, by the beginning of 1920 the European powers had become convinced of the impossibility of further postponing the conclusion of the Turkish peace. When the Americans in January 1920 once more expressed their desire to adjourn the discussion, their request was rejected. As the members of the Entente argued, the delay had already caused economic difficulties and had encouraged the resistance of the Turkish nationalists (or "the anarchist elements hostile to the Allies," as they were called), even allowing them the chance to establish "dangerous relations with the Bolshevists." On this ground the Council of the Heads of Delegation announced that the negotiations on the Ottoman question would soon start again at a meeting of the Supreme Council in London. ⁴⁹

THE CONFERENCE OF LONDON

At the beginning of 1920 the Peace Conference underwent a new transformation. In order to accelerate the decision process the victorious powers agreed to leave a simple Conference of the Ambassadors permanently functioning in Paris, while holding meetings of the Supreme Council in other localities of the Entente. The Ottoman settlement was the most important question still unresolved. In the meantime the process of estrangement of the Americans continued. While Wilson faced increasing difficulties with the ratification of the Versailles Treaty, he did not send a full plenipotentiary to the new round of peace negotiations but a simple observer, the ambassador to Paris, Henry White. The continuity of the anti-Ottoman and anti-Turkish discourse, however, was guaranteed by Lloyd George. Despite the consolidation of the nationalist movement, Lloyd George continued to play a key role, remaining resolutely hostile to the Turks and aligning himself even more than before with Venizelos. The French and the Italians were wavering. Having realized the difficulty of satisfying their political and economic ambitions in Anatolia against local resistance, they were showing more and more interest in the Turks. They established various contacts both with the government in Istanbul and with the nationalists. At the same time they remained strongly

dependent on British cooperation and assistance, not only to fulfill their general war aims (the implementation of the German Treaty for Paris, the solution of the Adriatic question for Rome) but also in order to have their respective spheres of influence in Cilicia and southern Anatolia recognized.⁵⁰

Following insistent British requests, the Supreme Council gathered in London in February 1920. From the outset Lloyd George reminded his colleagues that the Turkish peace was a priority. Due to American uncertainty, the issue had been left unanswered for too long and could no longer be postponed. Lord Curzon followed suit, listing the points where overall consensus had already been reached: the preservation of a Turkish state; the establishment of some form of international control over the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus; the separation of "non-Turkish states" such as Syria, Mesopotamia, and Palestine from "Turkey proper"; Armenian independence; and protection for Christian minorities. But other problems were still in search of a solution. Were the sultan and his government to be left in Constantinople (and, if so, with what powers)? What was to be done with European Turkey? What about the Greek occupation of Smyrna? And what about the Italian presence in southern Anatolia and the French in Cilicia? Lord George Property in the Suprementation of Smyrna? And what about the Italian presence in southern Anatolia and the French in Cilicia?

The differences among the Entente powers emerged as soon as the first point on the agenda, the fate of Constantinople, came into consideration. Millerand opened the discussion by stressing his country's interests in the Muslim world and the impossibility of imposing solutions explicitly aimed against the sultan and the Turks in Constantinople: "To expel the Turks from their capital would raise a very big question, and would mean a veritable adventure on which France shrunk from embarking.... The French Government felt that, for very cogent reasons it was desirable to maintain the Turks at Constantinople." Nitti was at least as determined: "We must not antagonize the populations of Turkey; we must be liberal, and we must pursue economic advantages...rather than political changes. In his view, there could be no question of expelling the Turks from Constantinople." The Italian premier also challenged the data about Constantinople provided by the Greeks, arguing that the Turks amounted to about 80 percent of its population. Faced with these objections, Lloyd George could not hide his irritation and gave free rein to his anti-Turkish inclinations: "The Turk had been in Europe for hundreds of years, and was always a curse, an oppressor and a source of trouble. He had never become a European, he had never assimilated European civilization and he had been a perpetual cause of war." Moreover,

"Constantinople was not Turk, and the majority of the population was not Turkish.... Therefore, by retaining the Sultan at Constantinople we were departing from principles by which the Allies had settled most of their problems, and we were retaining an alien monarch ruling over an alien population." Eventually, and only "with great reluctance," Lloyd George recognized that the British government would accept the views about the Turkish permanence in Constantinople expressed by its Allies, but he insisted that "the sway of the Sultan in Constantinople and Europe must be as strictly limited as possible." ⁵³

The meaning of these words became clear soon afterward, during the consideration of the questions of the Straits and European Turkey. Both the French and the Italians expressed their preference for somewhat light international control over the Straits, for the presence of a limited force simply in order to guarantee the freedom of passage over the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, and for the creation of an international commission competent for the Straits. Lloyd George advocated a much more substantial involvement, in contrast, supporting the establishment of a military garrison in Gallipoli that would be able to close the Straits in case of war: "[I]f we held Gallipoli we should have the Turk and his capital at our mercy." Curzon went into more detail: "He deprecated the tendency to assume that in the future there would always be an incompetent and acquiescent Turk at Constantinople; on the contrary, he himself thought that we must contemplate an active, hostile, ambitious Power there with strong Nationalist instinct.... How were we to prevent this? It could only be done by having the Turk at our mercy, and this required that we should hold with military and naval forces a command of the Straits." Moreover, the British asked for the assignment of most of Thrace to Greece. Reverting to the general orientation expressed during the previous rounds of negotiations, Lloyd George supported the establishment of the Turkish border even behind the Enos-Midia line, up to the Çatalca line of fortifications, almost at the outskirts of Constantinople.⁵⁴ After some days Millerand and Nitti conceded, but under the condition that the decision could still be reconsidered.⁵⁵

The debate concerning Smyrna and western Anatolia was even harsher. Faced with French and Italian skepticism, Lloyd George showed an inflexible anti-Turkish and pro-Greek stance: "[The Turks] had challenged Europe, and they must take the consequences. They did their best to destroy the Entente Powers, and very nearly did so. In the circumstances, he did not think that they were entitled to any consideration whatever." In addition, "He thought that whatever was done the Turks

would be troublesome, and that any idea that they would not give trouble in the future was absolutely futile, because in his own opinion they would be just as great a nuisance as ever." All Lloyd George would concede was that the Turks would preserve a purely nominal "suzerainty" rather than real "sovereignty," "in order to save their face, by allowing them to show the Turkish flag at Smyrna." 56 Surprisingly, this was not enough. When Venizelos renewed his demands for full direct sovereignty over Smyrna in front of the Supreme Council, 57 Lloyd George could not help supporting what he called "the powerful case" of the Greek premier, explaining that "Turkey was a fundamentally rotten Empire." In the end only new French and Italian objections induced him to formulate a series of proposals that could hardly be considered a compromise: specifically, the Turkish flag as "sole evidence" of Turkish suzerainty in Smyrna, establishment of Greek administration over the city, creation of a local parliament, and the presence of a Greek garrison. Most outstandingly, in only two years the local parliament would be entitled to ask the League of Nations for direct incorporation of the city into Greece through a plebiscite.⁵⁸ It was easy to foresee that in a short time Turkish formal suzerainty would change into full Greek sovereignty.59

The last major point under scrutiny was the European claims in Anatolia, specifically the French in Cilicia, the Italians in southern Anatolia, and now the British in Kurdistan east of the Tigris as well. With the abandonment of the system of the mandates the members of the Entente spoke in terms of "spheres of economic priority," a formula that they hoped would be more easily acceptable to the local populations and would also sound less imperialistic to Wilson. 60 The Italians were especially eager to obtain some concessions, because most of their requests to that point had been left unanswered, both in the Adriatic and in the colonial sector. On February 20, 1920, Nitti took the initiative to present the conference the draft of a tripartite agreement, according to which Italy, France, and England were all to commit themselves not to ask for economic concessions in the areas reserved to the other two. 61 In the following days the British perfected this scheme with a new project that Curzon defined as a "self-denying ordinance."62

By the end of February the Supreme Council seemed to have completed its consideration of the most important questions concerning the Turkish peace. Millerand left London to return to his country, while Nitti was preparing to do the same. The task of defining the details of the Turkish peace and discussing other matters was left to the Entente's foreign ministries or other high-profile diplomats. But at this point news

came that the Turkish nationalists had attacked the French forces in Cilicia, the Armenian units that were enrolled within them, and the local Armenian population, resulting in thousands of victims. The Maraş massacres provided Lloyd George with the opportunity to reopen the debate and advocate a sharp reaction against the Ottoman authorities in Constantinople. He not only denounced the sympathies for the nationalist movement nourished by many members of the newly elected parliament but also stressed the ambiguous behavior displayed by the new government headed by Hulusi Salih Paşa and by Mehmed VI himself. As Lloyd George anticipated on February 28, "The time now had arrived to take strong action and to do something dramatic."

As it soon became clear Lloyd George had in mind a complete occupation of Constantinople that would substantially increase the amount of troops that had been moved to the city since the end of the war. The declared goal was to make sure that the Turks would accept and implement the peace terms that were to be imposed upon them. It was easy to understand, however, that a military intervention in Constantinople would keep the door open for more radical solutions than those already negotiated. The words of the British premier certainly did not dispel this impression:

There would be no object in telling the Sultan: "We are going to leave you a little piece of Turkey. We are taking away the wings and the breast, but you will be able to enjoy a few bones." As a matter of fact, what would be left to Turkey? One half of the old Turkish Empire would be taken away, including many of the richest and most fertile parts. In addition, the Straits would be occupied by the Allies, and Turkey would be made to pay for that. Constantinople would not be a source of revenue to the Sultan, since the revenue would go to the maintenance of the Allied forces of occupation.... The fact must be realized that the Allies had no glad things to give him...it would only be through the exhibition of irresistible force that the Turks would be brought to see reason. The Turks were not formidable. Alone they had always been beaten, except perhaps by the Greeks.... Turkey possessed a false, sham reputation.⁶⁴

Lloyd George's request raised an intense debate. Not only the Italians and the French but also influential members of the British government such as the war secretary, Winston Churchill, expressed their concern

about the consequences of an intervention in Constantinople and the possibility of the outbreak of a general conflict with the Turks. However, they could not resist Lloyd George's reiterated pleas. 65 On the night of March 15 the occupation of Constantinople was carried out by British, French, and Italian troops, whose number soon rose to 30,000. It was a new blow to the prestige of the sultan and of the Ottoman authorities, after the occupation of Smyrna the previous May. The subsequent political crisis was solved only through the dissolution of the Ottoman parliament, the confinement of Ottoman representatives to the island of Malta, and the return to the grand vezirate of the discredited Damat Ferit Paşa. Paradoxically, the real beneficiary was Mustafa Kemal, who was able to organize a new assembly in Ankara and who increasingly appeared to the Turkish public to be the only defender of the national interests.⁶⁶

In the meantime other severe decisions were adopted concerning the reduction of Turkish military forces, the control of Turkish public finances, and the protection of minorities. This was an especially sensitive issue, considering not only the questionable record held by the Ottoman Empire in this field but also the often propagandistic charges raised by the Allies. The report submitted to the Council of the Foreign Ministries by a specific Minorities Commission fully reflected the victors' lack of confidence in the Ottoman authorities and the Turkish people. The document advocated a series of measures that opened the way for further limitations of Turkish sovereignty: not only equality of rights for Turkish citizens regardless of nationality and religion but the disavowal of conversions to Islam after Turkey's intervention in the war, the right to search for lost persons in private houses and institutions, the commitment to recognize the Allies' decisions concerning the reciprocal and voluntary emigration of minorities, and ecclesiastic and educational autonomy for minorities. The most far-reaching provision was probably the appointment of a special representative of the League of Nations in Constantinople, charged with the implementation of the guarantees for minorities and entitled to make enquiries on the spot or to appoint delegates for that purpose. Moreover, in order to keep all these commitments from remaining a "dead letter," a specific preamble in the report of the Minorities Commission recommended other guarantees. These included the permanent presence of Allied troops and ships in the surroundings of Constantinople, the appointment of foreign officers in the police and gendarmerie (up to 25 percent of the total), and a system of recruitment for police, gendarmes, and rural and forest guards that would reflect the religious and ethnic composition of the local populations. This preamble went so far as to suggest that the Allies should consider "the removal of the Turkish Government from Constantinople as a possible penalty for a breach by the Turkish Government of their pledges." That was a veritable sword of Damocles: every incident concerning minorities would offer an opportunity to expel the Turkish authorities from Constantinople. 67

Despite these far-reaching implications, the report of the Minorities Commission and even its preamble were approved without major changes. The only important exception concerned the appointment of a League of Nations representative in Constantinople with special competencies for the protection of minorities. The granting of a wide array of powers to a representative of the League of Nations met serious objections within the Council of Foreign Ministries. The Italians criticized the idea of "setting up of another King in Constantinople" and obtained French support. Even Curzon seemed willing to give up, but then he asked that the question be submitted to the Council of the League of Nations for an opinion. The request was finally abandoned only when it became clear that the council would not be able to answer in a short amount of time, prolonging the preparation of the peace terms with Turkey.

With a few additions regarding Armenia and Kurdistan, by the beginning of April the Conference of London had completed the drafting of the peace terms with Turkey. At this point the Supreme Council was supposed to submit the decisions reached in the British capital to a final and only formal reexamination. As the following events were to prove, in reality the debate over the Turkish settlement was not completely over yet.

THE FAILURE OF THE ATTEMPTS TO MITIGATE THE TURKISH PEACE TERMS: THE CONFERENCES OF SAN REMO, BOULOGNE, AND SPA

After London the Supreme Council gathered again in the second half of April in the Italian sea resort of San Remo. From the opening of the conference Lloyd George showed his willingness to maintain the initiative and asked for a quick delivery of the peace terms to the Ottoman government. He believed that the Allies should not lose momentum after the occupation of Constantinople, which had produced, he claimed, a "very good impression" on the Turks. Under pressure, the other representatives of the Entente accepted the date of May 10 for the presentation of the peace conditions.⁷⁰

At this point, however, the conference host, Italian premier Nitti, voiced the perplexities that he had been nurturing in the previous months, which certainly also reflected his frustration over his country's unresolved claims. Speaking to his colleagues, Nitti stressed the danger of a Turkish reaction and invited them to consider a modification of the peace terms previously elaborated. According to him, "the difficulty at the present moment was to make a treaty that Turkey would sign. The next difficulty, and a greater one, would be to obtain the ratification of the treaty; the third and greatest would be to obtain its execution. He wished to make a treaty of peace and not one of war." As Nitti warned with a good amount of foresight, the treaty was likely to cause the outbreak of military conflict between Turkey and Greece. Was this really what his colleagues wanted? And what would be done if Turkish resistance arose? Although Nitti claimed that he was not suggesting new proposals but "merely expressing his anxiety regarding the future," his words were a veritable attack on the general frame of the Turkish settlement.⁷¹

In the following days Nitti renewed his attempts to change the Turkish peace terms, expressing serious doubts about the establishment of the border in Thrace on the Catalca line, the separation of Smyrna from Turkey, and the inclusion of Erzurum in Armenia. The Italian premier was especially critical of the settlement envisaged for Thrace and of giving the Greeks a foothold in the Gallipoli Peninsula:

It was a question that seriously affected the peace of the world. If the frontier were to be drawn up to Chatalja [Catalca], very great difficulties might ensue. Turkey would be practically driven out of Europe, and would cease to have any interest in it. The control of the Straits would be rendered difficult.... As a result of the dispositions of the Turks, Greece would be plunged into a formidable war. He doubted whether Greece would be equal to the struggle or able to survive it.... This might lead to a general massacre of Greeks, and to a general conflagration throughout Islam. 72

Nitti also deemed it necessary to warn that Italy would engage in the protection of the Straits no matter what final decisions were reached but would not be able to join a military conflict in Asia.

As was easily foreseeable, Nitti's words caused a veritable clash with Lloyd George. The British premier claimed to understand the perplexities of his Italian colleague but could not see any viable alternative to

the decisions previously agreed upon for Thrace or Smyrna: "Turkey had always misgoverned subject races, and the Powers had always been unable to rescue her Christian subjects from oppression.... In view of the past he thought it incomprehensible to leave a large Greek population under the Turks. This would be in flat contradiction of the declared principles of the Allies." In contrast, "Greece was a civilized Power.... If these territories were to be given to Greece they would flourish under a progressive and industrious people, and contribute to the promotion of civilization." In the same context Lloyd George confidently denied that the Turkish nationalists might prevail in a military conflict against the Greeks: "No one believed that Mustafa Kemal would be able to drive the Greeks out of Asia Minor." He shared Nitti's opinions only in reference to Erzurum, being skeptical about a solution favorable to Armenia in a region where the Armenians were a clear minority.⁷³

Due to Anglo-Italian differences, the outcome of the San Remo Conference seemed at risk. In reality the stalemate was overcome by the intervention of the French representatives. All of a sudden Millerand and his collaborators expressed complete support for the British requests concerning the establishment of the Turkish frontier in Europe on the Çatalca line and a prominent Greek influence over Smyrna. It was a clear demonstration that they were willing to sacrifice their previous objections on the Turkish settlement in order to preserve the Anglo-French collaboration in Europe, specifically vis-à-vis Germany. As far as the vilayet of Erzurum was concerned, the French even went beyond Lloyd George's demands and supported the assignment of the region to the Armenians. The Thracian border subsequently was fixed on the Çatalca line, the only concession being the establishment of vague guarantees for the Muslim holy sites in Adrianople/Edirne. Similarly, no change was introduced relating to Smyrna, although the deadline for the planned plebiscite for direct annexation to Greece was postponed from two to five years. The Allied representatives tried to avoid undesired commitments to Armenia and made a last attempt to obtain American involvement, asking Washington to take on a mandate over the whole country or at least to organize an arbitrage for Erzurum.⁷⁴

Finally, the members of the Entente completed the consideration of the agreement "on the attribution of special interests in the territories of the former Ottoman Empire." Eager to satisfy their claims in southern Anatolia and Cilicia, the Italians and the French signed the Tripartite Agreement in May. The British, however, refused to do the same. According to their explanations, it was not necessary to irritate the Turks before

the signature of the peace treaty. But their real intention was clearly to maintain a useful instrument for creating pressure on their sometimes restless allies.75

As demanded by Lloyd George, the peace terms were delivered in Paris on May 10 to an Ottoman delegation led by Tevfik Paşa. With a variety of tones and nuances, the government in Istanbul and the sultan lost no time in showing their disappointment and expressing their desire for a substantial revision of the peace conditions. Their complaints, however, were to no avail. The only concession that they could obtain concerned the deadline for the presentation of their counterproposals, which was originally one month but was later delayed to two.⁷⁶

The reaction of the nationalist movement was definitely more worrisome. In June the nationalist forces launched a successful offensive in the peninsula of Ismid (İzmit), which provided direct contact with British forces and threatened to open the road to the Straits and Constantinople. Under the influence of these events, Lloyd George and Millerand hastily organized a meeting at Hythe and allowed the Greek troops stationed in Thrace to launch a counteroffensive. At a subsequent trilateral meeting in Boulogne, however, the new Italian government led by Giovanni Giolitti was not convinced. Carlo Sforza, the Italian foreign minister and the previous high commissar to Constantinople, went so far as to suggest the opening of peace negotiations directly with the nationalists if the Greeks were defeated: "In that event, he asked whether it might not be the case that the Allied Powers might even have to conduct *pourparlers* with the Turkish nationalists, who, on their part, might conceivably, having grown wise by experience, be prepared to show themselves not altogether unreasonable." For the first time since the opening of the Peace Conference Lloyd George's views seemed to vacillate. He did not categorically refuse Sforza's request but replied that the choice would depend on the military developments of the next few days.⁷⁷

The success of the Greek counteroffensive in the Ismid Peninsula put an end to these doubts. When the Supreme Council met in Spa to examine the Turkish counterproposals in the first half of July, the Allies had recovered their optimism and self-confidence. To be sure, Sforza did not lose this last opportunity to make a plea for a greater consideration for Turkish interests. The Italian foreign minister invited the French and the British to consider

the danger which might arise from the Sultan being turned out of Constantinople and the consequent unrest all over Islamic countries. He questioned whether it would not be more expedient to have a Turkish Government at Constantinople with whom to negotiate rather than have that Government located outside. The question he was putting to himself was: "Could not some compromise be found by which the Allies would be able to reinforce the authority of the Turkish Government at Constantinople so that they might assist that Government to combat the Nationalist movement in Anatolia, which not only threatened us, but the whole world?"

Sforza's words, however, went unheeded. Venizelos, who was present at the meeting, sharply replied that "[t]he only way to bring Mustafa Kemal to heel was to defeat him everywhere. He himself was born in Turkey and knew Turkey well, and he was perfectly certain that the only right way to deal with the Turk was by conquest." Lloyd George agreed, his confidence fully restored: "The Turk was a continual source of trouble in Europe and Asia. He was a nuisance and a curse... a veritable devastating agent.... The Turk now pleaded for mercy, but he was not entitled to mercy. He was, in fact, the worst criminal of the whole of our enemies." Faced with this reaction, Sforza had no other choice but to step back and to admit that the most important thing was to maintain Allied unity.⁷⁹

In this atmosphere the Allies categorically refused to consider the Ottoman counterproposals to the peace terms. The only exception regarded a relatively minor issue, the composition of the international commission that would soon come to control the Straits, where the Allies allowed the inclusion of a Turkish representative. On Fronted with this failure, the Ottoman delegation to Paris led by Damat Ferit Paşa tried to gain time but after a few days had to bend to threats and complaints. On August 10, 1920, the peace treaty was signed in an exhibition room of the renowned porcelain factory of Sèvres, a circumstance that would soon symbolize its weakness and fragility. Est

CONCLUSION

The Paris Peace Conference was not only the final episode of a decadeslong process of dissolution of the Ottoman Empire but also the culmination of an Orientalist discourse that had even deeper roots. This was evident during the first six months of 1919, up to the signature of the Treaty of Versailles. Thanks to the continued presence in Paris of all the major leaders of the Entente and President Wilson, the conference could be considered a veritable "world's government." 82 In those months practically none of the leaders of the victorious powers could avoid the temptation to exploit anti-Ottoman and anti-Turkish stereotypes in order to promote their countries' war aims or ambitions. In some instances this relation was even reversed: as conference proceedings illustrate, the members of the Supreme Council and their collaborators fell victim to the same stereotypes that they were employing. This seems especially valid in Wilson's case. Unlike the European representatives, the American president did not have fundamental goals to pursue in the territories of the Ottoman Empire but convinced himself of the necessity of an onerous American commitment in Constantinople or in Armenia for the sake of the world.

With the American estrangement from the peace conference, the decision process became increasingly dominated by the British. Until then Lloyd George had been able to maintain a relatively low profile thanks to American overexposure, although England was the power with greater interests at stake. The British premier seemed to pursue very concrete gains in the eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East, under the traditional logic of realpolitik, but in reality he was dependent upon ideological considerations and prejudices. From this point of view his obsessive verbal attacks against the Ottoman Empire and his support for the Greeks and for Venizelos were symptomatic. The French and the Italians were more restrained, primarily focusing on the European settlement and being fully aware that the fulfillment of their demands in Anatolia required some form of cooperation with the Turks. They too, however, were not exempt from mixing expansionist motives and cultural bias.

In the end the decisions of the Peace Conference seemed to represent a triumph of anti-Ottoman and anti-Turkish stances. Yet the Greek landing in Smyrna, the Allied occupation of Constantinople, and the signature of the Treaty of Sèvres struck the final blow to the Ottoman Empire but opened the door to the new Turkey.

NOTES

1. Harold W. V. Temperly, ed., A History of the Peace Conference of Paris; Harry N. Howard, The Partition of Turkey; Paul C. Helmreich, From Paris to Sèvres; Marian Kent, ed., The Great Powers and the End of the Ottoman Empire. For Turkish policy: Salahi R. Sonyel, Turkish Diplomacy, 1918–1923; Erik J. Zürcher, The Unionist Factor; Andrew Mango, Atatürk; idem, From the Sultan to Ataturk; for the Greek role: Michael Llewellyn Smith, Ionian Vision; Nicholas Petsalis-Diomidis, Greece at the Paris Peace Conference (1919). See also two more general studies: David

- Fromkin, A Peace to End All Peace, on the last phase of the Eastern Question; and Margaret Macmillan, Peacemakers, on the Peace Conference.
- 2. Papers on Foreign Relations of the United States (hereafter FRUS), 1918, Supplement I, 1, 15–16.
- 3. The Papers of Woodrow Wilson (hereafter PWW), vol. 53, Jusserand to Lansing, November 29, 1918, transmitted by Polk to Wilson, December 2, 1918, 294.
- 4. *PWW*, vol. 53, memorandum on a meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet about Wilson's visit to London, December 30, 1918, 561–62. See also excerpt from the Journal of William Christian Bullit, December 9 [10], 1918, 351.
- 5. For the Italian policy toward the Ottoman Empire during the Paris Peace Conference, see Fabio Grassi, *L'Italia e la questione turca (1919–1923)*; Francesco Caccamo, L'Italia e la "Nuova Europa"; Luca Micheletta, "Un'impresa inutile e dispendiosa"; less originally, Fiorella Perrone, La politica estera italiana e la dissoluzione dell'Impero Ottomano (1914–1923). The Italian caution toward the Ottoman settlement found expression in the reply sent by the Italian Foreign Ministry to the above-mentioned French proposals for the organization of the Peace Conference. The document vaguely mentioned the "special situation of the different races that compose the territories of the Ottoman Empire." A specific reference was made only to the creation of an independent Armenian state: Bonin Longare to Pichon, November 20, 1918, in I documenti diplomatici italiani (hereafter DDI), I, 1, d. 401. The Italian delegation to the Peace Conference, however, was not immune to the anti-Ottoman and anti-Turkish feelings prevailing in Paris and even tried to exploit them for its own purposes. See the arguments with which the Italians justified their claims in southern Anatolia, DDI, I, 2, d. 96, memorandum by De Martino, January 24, 1919.
- 6. FRUS, PPC, 3, Council of Ten, 30 January 30, 1919, 15:30. During the discussion Wilson raised different objections to the proposal to entrust a mandate to the United States but immediately afterward expressed his real stance to a member of his entourage: "They want us to be the mandatory for them and we should be, but he...could not promise such a thing until he had gone home, had gone on a speech making tour and educated the United States to the point of taking the trusteeship of any European or Asiatic country, for the proposal is for the United States to be the mandatory for Constantinople": PWW, 54:414, from the Diary of Edith Bentham, January 31, 1919.
- 7. FRUS, PPC, 3, Council of Ten, 3 February 3, 1919, 11:00 (quotation); and February 4, 1919, 11:00.
- 8. For the Greek claims, see Helmreich, From Paris to Sèvres, 84–93; Petsalis-Diomidis, Greece at the Paris Peace Conference, 118–75; Caccamo, L'Italia e la "Nuova Europa," 75–89. The proceedings of the technical commissions are to be found in the confidential print Conférence de la paix, 1919–1920: Recueil des Actes de la Conférence (Paris: Imprimerie National, 1922–1935), specifically in the volumes Commission chargée d'étudier les questions territoriales intéressant la Grèce and Comité Central des Questions Territoriales (1923 and 1926).
- 9. *PWW*, confidential note of the war secretary to Wilson, transmitted by Newton Diehl Baker, February 11, 1919, 55:81–82.
- 10. PWW, remarks to members of the Democratic National Committee, February 28,

- 1919, 55:322-23. See also an address to the Metropolitan Opera House, March 4, 1919, 55:414-15.
- 11. PWW, House to Wilson, March 7, 1919, 55:459; FRUS, PPC, 5, Council of Four, March 20, 1919, 15:00.
- 12. For the Italian initiatives in Anatolia, see Luciano Flussi, "La diplomazia delle cannoniere"; Fabio Grassi, "Le battaglie diplomatiche relative alle occupazioni italiane in Turchia nel 1919"; Giovanni Cecini, Il corpo di spedizione italiano in Anatolia (1919–1922); Micheletta, "Un'impresa inutile e dispendiosa." Often these works show the tendency to accept the charges launched against the Italian policymakers since the Peace Conference and the Smyrna crisis. A more objective reconstruction seems possible, comparing the conference proceedings with the abundant Italian diplomatic documentation on the subject: DDI, 6, 1, ds. 634, 774, 831; vol. 2, ds. 108, 132, 179, 234, 374, 413, 461, 465, 479, 480, 544, 551, 572, 601, 603, 623, 633, 635, 691, 820, 879, 930, 941, 945; vol. 3, ds. 18, 33, 64, 70, 74, 95, 115, 132, 136, 162, 255, 297, 316.
- 13. The best analysis of the Adriatic crisis is still to be found in the old work by René Albrecht-Carrié, Italy at the Paris Peace Conference. For the impact of the Adriatic crisis on the issue of Smyrna, see Smith, Ionian Vision, 77-84; Helmreich, From Paris to Sèvres, 94-101.
- 14. FRUS, PPC, 5, Council of Three, April 21, 1919, 16:00 (quotation); Mantoux, 1, d. XLII.
- 15. FRUS, PPC, 5, Council of Three, May 5, 1919, 11:00.
- 16. FRUS, PPC, 5, Council of Three, May 6, 1919, 11:00. The Big Three communicated their decisions to Venizelos but kept them hidden from the Italians: Mantoux, 1, d. LXVI, May 7, 1919, 12:00.
- 17. Helmreich, From Paris to Sèvres, 94-101; Petsalis-Diomidis, Greece at the Paris Peace Conference; Smith, Ionian Vision, 86-101. For the consequences of the occupation of Smyrna in Turkey and the birth of the movement of national resistance, see Sonyel, Turkish Diplomacy; Mango, Atatürk; for a recent synthesis, see idem, From the Sultan to Ataturk; for an Italian biography of Mustafa Kemal, see Fabio Grassi, Atatürk.
- 18. FRUS, PPC, 5, Council of Three, May 13, 1919, 16:00 (quotation); Mantoux, 2, d. LXXVII.
- 19. Ibid.
- 20. FRUS, PPC, 5, Council of Three, May 14, 1919, 16:00.
- 21. FRUS, PPC, 5, Council of Three, May 17, 1919, 11:00; Meeting of the Council of Four, 4:15 AM; Mantoux, 2, d. LXXXII.
- 22. FRUS, PPC, 5, Council of Three, May 17, 1919, 11:00.
- 23. FRUS, PPC, 5, Council of Three, May 19, 1919, 11:30.
- 24. FRUS, PPC, 5, Council of Three, May 21, 1919, 11:00.
- 25. FRUS, PPC, 5, Council of Three, May 19, 1919, 11:30. According to Lloyd George, "At last M. Orlando had let out that he really did not care a scrap about Asia-Minor, and the Italian Government only wished to have that as compensation if they could not secure Fiume."
- 26. FRUS, PPC, 5, Council of Four, May 19, 1919, 16:00; Mantoux, II, d. LXXXIV.
- 27. FRUS, PPC, 6, Council of Four, May 30, 1919, 16:00.

- 28. FRUS, PPC, 4, audition of the Ottoman delegation in front of the Council of Ten, June 16, 1919, 11:00; Mantoux, 2, d. CXXIX.
- FRUS, PPC, 6, Council of Four, June 21, 1919, 16:00, with draft answer to the Turks (quotation). See also Mantoux, 2, d. CXXXIV, June 21, 1919, 16:00; and FRUS, PPC, 6, June 23, 1919, 11:00.
- 30. FRUS, PPC, 6, Council of Three, June 25, 1919, 16:00 (quotation), with attached a note of the Turkish delegation to the president of the Peace Conference, memorandum on the new organization of the Ottoman Empire, dated June 23, 1919; Mantoux, 2, d. CXLI.
- 31. FRUS, PPC, 6, Council of Three, June 26, 1919, 16:00.
- 32. FRUS, PPC, 6, Council of Four, June 28, 1919, 17:00, with attached a letter revised by Balfour to the Turkish delegation.
- 33. FRUS, PPC, 7, Council of the Heads of Delegation, July 18, 1919, 10:00.
- 34. FRUS, PPC, 8, Council of the Heads of Delegation, September 15, 1919, 10:20.
- 35. FRUS, PPC, 7, Council of the Heads of Delegation, July 5, 1919, 15:00.
- FRUS, PPC, 7, Council of the Heads of Delegation, August 11, 1919, 15:30. For British worries about American policy, see *Documents on British Foreign Policy*, 1919–1939 (hereafter DBFP), 4, ds. 484, 485, 488, 490, 537, 546, 550, 563, 603.
- 37. Luca Micheletta, *Italia e Gran Bretagna nel primo dopoguerra* 1:10–11; Petsalis-Diomidis, *Greece at the Paris Peace Conference*, 251–56; Caccamo, *L'Italia e la "Nuova Europa,*" 181–86. For British negative reports on Italian policy and Italian-Turkish contacts, see *DBFP*, 4, ds. 555, 674; *DBFP*, 13, ds. 75, 88.
- 38. FRUS, PPC, 7, Council of the Heads of Delegation, July 18, 1919, 10:00 and 16:00, with annexed telegram from the *şeyhülislam*, July 15, 1919.
- 39. FRUS, PPC, 9, Council of the Heads of Delegation, November 8, 1919, 10:30, with annexed Report of the Commission of Inquiry in the Greek Occupation of Smyrna and Adjacent Territories. The proceedings of the commission are included in the already quoted confidential print Commission chargée d'étudier les questions territoriales.
- 40. *FRUS*, PPC, 9, Council of the Heads of Delegation, November 10, 1919, 10:30; and November 12, 1919, 10:30.
- 41. Mango, Atatürk; idem, From the Sultan to Ataturk; Smith, Ionian Vision, 102–21.
- 42. Helmreich, From Paris to Sèvres, 153–58; Petsalis-Diomidis, Greece at the Paris Peace Conference, 255–76; Caccamo, L'Italia e la "Nuova Europa," 196–211.
- 43. See primarily the thorough analysis by Helmreich, *From Paris to Sèvres*, 201–29.
- 44. DBFP, 2, d. 55, Notes of a Conversation, December 11, 1919.
- 45. *DBFP*, 4, ds. 631 and 632, Anglo-French Conference in London, December 22, 1919, 11:45 and 15:00. In a document prepared for the meeting, Berthelot went even further and fully embraced the anti-Turkish rhetoric familiar to Lloyd George. For instance, Berthelot wrote: "From the moral and historical point of view, the expulsion from Europe of a state based upon the right of conquest and the oppression of different races and of superior civilisation represents a triumph of Justice.... The conquest of Constantinople by the Turks marked the end of the middle age. Their exodus will mark the beginning of a new era": appendix to d. 630, Berthelot's note of December 12.
- 46. For the differences within the British government, see notably *DBFP*, 4, d. 646,

Curzon's memorandum on the future of Constantinople. In this document Curzon harshly reacted to the "surprise," "astonishment," and "amazement" expressed by Montagu at the idea of expelling the Turks from the city. In his reply the British foreign minister displayed the worst repertoire of anti-Turkish stereotypes: "I remain profoundly of the opinion not only that the present opportunities ought to be taken by terminating the connection of the Turk with Europe, but that if it [is] not taken we shall be laying up for ourselves a heritage of future trouble, intrigue, and wars in Eastern Europe which we shall regret for generations.... It is a commonplace that for wellnigh four centuries the rule of the Turks has been a blight and a curse to the countries which he has misgoverned, and I know of no single good thing that the Turk has done to a single nation or community or interest in Europe. His presence at Constantinople has poisoned the atmosphere of East Europe, everywhere spreading corruption, maladministration, and ruin. At Constantinople he has always been able to set the Powers by the ears, to embroil Governments and nations, and to inoculate the West with the worst vices of Eastern intrigue. From there he has ordered the massacres of hundreds of thousands of his Christian subjects. Constantinople in his hands has been, and if left there will remain, a plague-spot of the Eastern world."

- 47. For a first manifestation of the changes affecting French policy after Millerand became president of the council (and foreign minister as well), see DBFP, 4, d. 658, Vansittart to Curzon, January 12, 1920, with annexed Berthelot's note on the peace with Turkey.
- 48. Caccamo, L'Italia e la "Nuova Europa," 239–40, 265–66. See also Micheletta, Italia e Gran Bretagna, 104-7, 127-28.
- 49. FRUS, PPC, 9, Council of the Heads of Delegation, January 21 1920, 11 AM, with annexed project of reply to a memorandum by Lansing.
- 50. For the first contacts of the members of the Entente with the nationalist movement, see Sonyel, Turkish Diplomacy. For the Italian case, see Fabio Grassi, "Diplomazia segreta Italo-Turca dopo la Prima Guerra Mondiale; idem, "I profitti di un falliment; Caccamo, L'Italia e la "Nuova Europa," 261-62. For France's Turkish policy, see *Documents diplomatiques français* (hereafter *DDF*), 1920, 2, ds. 69, 92, 98, 151, 165, 178, 180, 184, 185, 187, 194, 202, 232, 241, 246, 265, 294, 297, 344.
- 51. DBFP, 7, d. 1, Conference of London, February 12, 1920.
- 52. *DBFP*, 7, d. 6, Conference of London, February 14, 1920, 10:30.
- 53. Ibid.
- 54. Ibid.
- 55. *DBFP*, 7, d. 14, Conference of London, February 18, 1920, 15:00.
- 56. DBFP, 7, d. 7, Conference of London, February 14, 1920, 16:00. Significantly, when asked to clarify the concept of "suzerainty," Lloyd George explained: "by it was intended that the Turks should have no power of interference in the Greek administration. The insertion of the clauses was designed merely to save their amour-propre. The utmost they would do was to fly their flag": DBFP, 7, d. 14, February 18, 1920, 15:00. Further discussions were raised by the British request that the Greeks from Smyrna could be enlisted in the Greek army and could elect their representatives to the Greek parliament. Nitti was especially against this, pointing out that such measures would be equivalent to a recognition of Greek sovereignty

- and would be unacceptable for the Turks: *DBFP*, 7, ds. 20 and 24, February 21 and 24, 1920, 11:00.
- 57. *DBFP*, 7, d. 24, Conference of London, February 24, 1920, 11:00.
- 58. *DBFP*, 7, d. 25, Conference of London, February 24, 1920, 16:00.
- 59. DBFP, 7, d. 26, Conference of London, February 25, 1920, 11:30. Even this was not enough for Venizelos, who demanded that "the Turkish flag, when flown, must be on some fort outside the city."
- 60. DBFP, 7, d. 12, Conference of London, February 17, 1920, 15:30.
- 61. DBFP, 7, ds. 18 and 19, Conference of London, February 20, 1920, 11:30 and 16:00.
- 62. *DBFP*, 7, d. 29, Conference of London, February 26, 1920, 16:00. Curzon had coined the expression "self-denying ordinance" the previous week: *DBFP*, 7, d. 15, February 18, 1920, 15:00.
- 63. DBFP, 7, d. 38, Conference of London, February 28, 1920.
- 64. DBFP, 7, d. 45, Conference of London, March 3, 1920.
- 65. DBFP, 7, ds. 50, 51, 53, 55 and 56, Conference of London, March 5, 8, and 10, 1920.
- 66. Sonyel, Turkish Diplomacy; Mango, Atatürk; idem, From the Sultan to Ataturk.
- 67. For the Report of the Minorities Commission, see *DBFP*, 7, d. 57, Conference of London, March 11, 1920.
- 68. DBFP, 7, ds. 57 and 58, Conference of London, March 11 and 12, 1920.
- 69. DBFP, 7, d. 62, Conference of London, March 16, 1920, 16:00.
- 70. DBFP, 8, d. 4, Conference of San Remo, April 19, 1920.
- 71. DBFP, 8, ds. 6 and 7, Conference of San Remo, April 20, 1920.
- 72. DBFP, 8, d. 9, Conference of San Remo, April 21, 1920.
- 73. Ibid.
- 74. DBFP, 8, ds. 10, 11, 12, 14, Conference of San Remo, April 22, 23, and 24, 1920.
- 75. DBFP, 8, d. 13, Conference of San Remo, April 23, 1920.
- 76. *DBFP*, 13, ds. 61, 64, 78, 80; *DDF*, 1920, II, ds. 45, 74.
- 77. DBFP, 8, d. 33, Conference of Boulogne, June 21, 1920, 16:00. For the delivery of the Turkish counterproposals, see DBFP, 13, d. 91, d. 101 (and footnote 2).
- 78. *DBFP*, 8, d. 47, Conference of Spa, July 7, 1920.
- 79. *DBFP*, 8, d. 47, Conference of Spa, July 7, 1920. Curzon complained to Sforza at Spa about Italian-Turkish contacts: *DBFP*, 13, d. 98, July 10, 1920.
- 80. DDF, 1920, 2, d. 239, Millerand to Defrance, July 24, 1920.
- 81. *DDF*, 1920, 2, d. 324, allocution de M. Jules Cambon à la Conférence des Ambassadeurs, August 10, 1920.
- 82. Macmillan, Peacemakers, 1.

Fragmentation and Unification of the Body in World War I

Senadin Musabegović

In war situations, when it is exposed to direct danger (the impact of shells, shrapnel, bullets, air strikes, biological warfare, or bayonets in face-to-face combat), the body frees within itself a new dimension. It creates a new relation to space, to things that surround it, and to itself. In other words, a body exposed to explosions of shells and bombs, targeted by bullets, or lying in a trench acquires a new possibility and form of its own extension. The affective contents (suffering, pain, fear, internal disintegration, and anxiety) that arise in such conditions awaken in the body a new experience of its own self, create in it a new concept of the world, and set a new boundary that separates it from that world.

This new relationship between the interior of the body and the exterior world undoubtedly is also conditioned by direct evidence of the proximity and presence of death. In such situations death is not something abstract, an exception within everyday life that disrupts its stabilized and steady form and thus violates the standardized, conserved life process guaranteed by convention. Death itself becomes part of the body: more specifically, in such conditions death becomes so close to the body that in its proximity the body recognizes itself. Death also relates to the body as its otherness, something removed from it. But at the same time death is something close to it, connected to its interior, similar to Emmanuel Levinas's concept of God: God is the Other that possesses both absolute distance and absolute proximity. 1 That otherness is not bounded by a clear line of division but is a constant communication in which the relation of proximity and distance, exterior and interior, closed and open, is not conditioned by bipolar static separateness but exists in constant mutual addressing and constant creation. Analogous to this, death is not

something absolutely different from the body and separated from it; it is within the body and at the same time outside of it. While Levinas's address to the Other represents redemption and contains elements of prayer that communicates with God, the presence of death within the body represents a state of conflict within the body itself that it strives to overpower and overcome. The complete effort of the body is to survive: to outdo death itself and to reshape it. In its effort to overcome death the body strives at the same time to give it form, to find a meaning for the suffering that death causes and articulate all the disintegration and discomfort that arises when it is faced with death. In this very effort to overcome death or to articulate it the body acquires within itself a new heroic quality.

Therefore the presence of death is not manifested only through the effort of the body to overcome the very boundaries of death but also involves overcoming the body itself. The body in danger tries to overpower death itself, to evade it, but at the same time it is symbolically trying to overcome itself, to overpower its own boundaries, possibilities, and potentials and thus to surpass itself. The mythological consciousness has described the process that the body actually undergoes when it is faced with mortal danger as a cycle of purification, renewal, and transcendence. In numerous mythological rituals the experience of death, apart from purifying, renewing, and regenerating the old, also symbolizes the production of a new body. For the so-called primitive consciousness, mortal danger under war conditions can only mean initiation. Mortal danger can give rebirth to the body: it can create a new body, a new man. As Mary Douglas says, the very process of initiation is connected with the idea of creating a new man.² In the bipolarity between the clean and the dirty that Douglas establishes, death under war conditions can represent the dirtiness that an individual must discard in order to be purified, renewed, and transformed into an adult member of the community. In other words, mortal danger enables the individual to be rid of all inner dirtiness and thus regenerate and renew the body. By overcoming death and casting off their own filth individuals transcend themselves and illuminate themselves from the inside: they overcome the boundaries of their own bodies, surpassing their own limitations, which can symbolically be represented as filth. According to the same principle, the body under war conditions (unprotected by outside laws and norms meant to protect it) expresses itself in a new way that was not possible in everyday life.

When in danger during war, however, the body also undergoes another process, opposite to the process of self-regeneration, renewal, and

purification. This is the process of trauma, when the body is engulfed by its own boundaries and closes up within its limitations, which both determine and negate it. The potentials that arise from the body at such a time, which for the mythological consciousness should signify purification, self-renewal, and self-regeneration, arise as fears and emotions that block the body.

Therefore a dual process is present for the body in a war situation. In one process the body succeeds in surpassing its own possibilities and capabilities in its desire to survive, to overpower mortal danger. In the other process the body closes itself up in its own fears and its own suffering, thus impeding itself. Mortal danger enables the body to see itself from a new angle that frees new potentials that enable it to overcome itself, to free a new emission of energy from itself and thus discover new perspectives. At the same time, however, the dangers of war can also emphasize fears, create a conflict between the body and the world, and even create disharmony within the body itself that inhibits communication and synthesis between emotions and affects. The body closes itself up within a traumatic membrane that inhibits free expression of its potentials and possibilities.

In accordance with this the body exposed to mortal danger faces two principles that determine it. The first is the principle of separation, partitioning, fragmentation. It represents the body that loses its composite parts, disintegrates, and disappears within its own details. The trauma develops within the body first as a process of fragmentation, then as a process of loss of foothold, and finally as a process that develops a feeling of rejection, desertion, and isolation within the body. So the body that disappears in fragments can be portrayed through different aspects of a soldier's experience. This process of fragmentation can be an internal experience of the body and simultaneously be a relation that the body establishes with the exterior, the world surrounding it and, in the same way, with another body. The second principle is one of making whole, uniting, linking, gathering, and assembling. Mortal danger enables the body to unite within itself all of its potentials, all of its possible energy.

THE PROCESS OF FRAGMENTATION

The feeling that the body is separating into fragments is caused primarily by everyday fear of destruction. The body in a war is faced with the immediate possibility that some foreign element such as a bomb, shrapnel, a bullet, or a bayonet will penetrate it and, as an internal intruder, partition it. This brings into question the body's coherence and wholeness and thus produces an injured and decimated body. In the same way the body in war every day is brought into contact with the possibility of the cutting off, amputation, and removal of its parts. Detrimental medical and hygienic conditions in war situations often force doctors to amputate parts of the body of the wounded due to the lack of adequate medical equipment and hygienic treatment that would guarantee successful healing of the wounds. Aspects and perspectives of a fragmented body, and of the very processes of fragmentation, can be recognized and realized in various aspects of a soldier's experience.

So, for example, the perspective of the body, which is exhibited in its disintegration, can be recognized in a soldier who has been killed, in his dead body. The bodies of dead soldiers under conditions of war often could not be adequately buried because they were located in "no man's land" or in a danger zone, so their living companions could, from a certain distance, watch them decompose and lose their physiognomy and firmness. One of the main experiences of a decaying body (losing its own boundary) is the decomposition of the corpse. It is therefore not unusual that one of the typical descriptions of suffering during war in poetry is connected to the description of a body that is decaying and thus losing its physiognomy. But the disintegration exhibited by a dead and decaying body becomes a reality that is expressed in the living body of a soldier. The image of a disintegrated body awakens a potential possibility that may happen at any moment within the body that is still alive.³ For this reason the disintegrating body expresses the internal feeling of a body that is still alive.4

The feeling that a soldier is delivered unto his own death is also created in the trenches. The immediate presence of death produces a state of abandonment and desertion: an individual life becomes a torn-off fragment that is unimportant for the whole. It becomes absolutely insignificant for the survival of the rest of humanity and its functioning as a whole. The individual and solitary body in a trench, abandoned and rejected in the face of death, is thus exposed to the complete solitude of its demise. As a disposable resource for the realization of army strategies, it becomes absolutely insignificant and is left as refuse, as something that has already passed into oblivion. Hence soldiers are called "cannon fodder." But only when the body is separated, isolated, and rejected by the whole can it serve the realization of its objectives. What the collective strategy needs is to diminish, devalue, reject, isolate, and fragment a body so that it can be efficiently used for the self-realization of the whole.

A body exposed to bullets and direct attacks or hidden in a trench activates within itself (based on the experience of a body falling apart) a feeling of separation that penetrates every pore of its existence. The living body of the soldier separates into pieces his earlier life. His concept of past and present is divided; his connection to everyday peacetime life becomes shaky and collapses. In a trench, away from his family, he observes a new world with different laws and rules that determine his everyday life. A rift is felt in his soldierly life, an unbridgeable gap between peacetime living and the experience of war.⁶

The soldier's connection to the outside world is also lost in fragments. Both in battle and in his unit, he is determined by his particular experience. In the same way, both when he is hiding and when he is running for shelter from bombs and bullets he is closed up in his individual perspective, which cannot include the entirety of the event. Because of this his perspective on the reality of war is crushed into details, as Paul Fussell described when speaking of the characteristics of the modern war and specifically of World War I, which was conducted without a clear concept or even clear visual observations as to who the enemy really was. The enemy was hidden, imperceptible. Modern technology and modern weapons do not allow the enemy to be noticed, let alone to be faced directly in the chest-to-chest combat that characterized the classic manner of battle. Even the vantage point of the enemy aiming at his victim has become fragmented: the bullet comes from everywhere, penetrates from all directions.

The complete experience of the world is also decomposed, divided, and separated into "us" and "them": "they" become more and more foreign, separated from our own view of the world. Even the "us" is divided into "us"-"ours" and "us"-"theirs," which is a euphemism for a traitor or an enemy from "our" ranks. Modern warfare that does not allow the enemy's appearance or gaze to be discerned creates a rift in the imagination about who that other one is and what is the true countenance and physiognomy of the other, who is actually the enemy. In this rift of the imagination, the enemy acquires a mythical dimension, primarily because his physiognomy cannot be discerned. Soldiers often invent experiences connected to the enemy and fantasize about him, while modern weapons ensure that the spatial distance separating the body of the enemy and the bodies of a soldier's own group is bridged by an efficient technique of killing and destruction. Even though modern technology enables perfect control over the enemy's body through its preciseness and efficiency, the physiognomy of the enemy becomes more and more vague and foreign.

In the same way, due to fear of death, suffering without end, hunger, bad weather, and unhygienic conditions, the soldier perceives his own body as broken up and divided into pieces. His body loses its wholeness and disintegrates into numerous unconnected, independent parts. With the explosion of a bomb, as in some fireworks displays, the total reality also breaks up into small pieces, which makes the boundaries between the inside and the outside of the body disappear. The outside of the body comes apart: outside reality, which disintegrates into fragments as its boundaries are erased, becomes the reality of the body. In other words the bomb that shatters and fragments the total reality at the same time destroys the boundary that the body sets up between itself and the surrounding world. The process of external fragmentation is thus internalized within the body, penetrating it and becoming its composite part. 8

THE PROBLEM OF UNIFICATION AND MYTH

The mythological view of self-regeneration and self-renewal defines itself through a stable process of separation: unifying. In mythological drama the relation between separation and unifying is natural and necessary: the process of separating is shaped like the process of unifying. For the mythological consciousness it is not unusual that the very experience of separation or crisis makes possible the process of renewal and unifying. But for the modern consciousness the following question arises: how is it possible to express the process of separation and unifying? Is this process successive: does it have a regular dramaturgy of causality and perpetuity, where the process of unifying necessarily follows the process of separation? Where does the process of unifying stop and the process of separating begin? Does this process treat a primary whole that has come apart and is to be unified or does it treat separation/unifying as forming something new? The answers to all these questions point to the determination of what we have labeled as the novum within the body when it is found in a war situation. Answering these questions could start with a long way around, with the question that gathers all of them into one: does the body really, as the mythological consciousness believes, purify itself of its inner filth in conditions of war and danger? Does this purification allow it again to create the balance that existed before and was later lost or forgotten, or does the casting out of filth allow it to discover itself in a radically new dimension? If we take into account the psychoanalytical findings that in the process of initiation dirtiness is mainly connected

to the world of childhood, does this mean that the body passing through the dangers of war frees itself of its own past, of its own childhood? Or does the war itself create an even greater internal dirtiness (that is, fragmentation) that offers no escape or possibility for growth or overcoming its own experience? In short: what is it that arises in the body as something new in a war situation and how does it undergo the process of separation and unifying? 10

The answer to this question is as follows: mythological power is based on the symbolic possibility of unification of the body in case of war trauma; hence the process of unification is not so much spontaneous in the body itself. It comes to the fore through the cultural and ritual practice of the imaginary constitution of unity between the individual and collective body. Although every ritual power possesses the elements of the ideological construction, it can be stated that since World War I the war experience resides in the invention of myth in modern times. The apocalyptic power of destruction in World War I brought to a crisis the symbolic power of naming the crisis itself: it created absence and emptiness in the inability to find the reason for such senseless war. The belief in science and progress disappeared in the military industry of fast and efficient killing. From this emptiness the totalitarian ideology came into existence, promising the unification of modern and premodern, rational and intuitive, the collective and individual body. Therefore the strength of the ideological power of totalitarianism is in the symbolic possibility of unification of the body itself, which must clear itself of all ambiguities, fragmentariness, and contradictions.

Yet, paradoxically, the power of totalitarian rule is in the permanent creation of disunity, crisis, war, and fragmentation in order to maintain the unity. The totalitarian regimes (Bolshevism and National Socialism) believed that liberalism resides on the individual atomization in which alienated individuals are at war with one another and that they are responsible for the terrible bloodshed in World War I. Even though the totalitarian regimes were based on the myth of collectivism, the whole power mechanism of the military and police control in the search for the internal enemy (whether a class enemy or a race enemy) lay exactly in atomization, fragmentation of the society itself, and construction of the state of war. The destructive power of World War I led to World War II because of the impossibility of expressing the process of crisis, fragmentation, and disunity in an authentic way. What happened instead was escape into the false unity that created new conflicts and new wars.

TOTALITARIANISM AND CRISIS OF THE NATIONAL STATE

The one thing that all modern philosophers agree on when considering totalitarianism is the immediate cause of modern totalitarianism (fascism and Bolshevism). They all see it in the violence that was made drastically apparent during World War I. Emilio Gentile goes so far as to claim that the very mythology of fascism is conditioned by the religious feelings evoked by the collective tragedies of World War I. François Furet and Ernst Nolte see an incentive for the rise of violence in Bolshevism in the violence caused by World War I. Although for many sociologists and intellectuals World War I should have presented an opportunity for social redemption and the organic unification of modern society, is it is one of the causes for the development of charismatic secular religiosity in leaders. Welcomed with incredible enthusiasm, the war ended with one of the largest bloodbaths, in which the idea of progress disintegrated.

Many totalitarian regimes used the myth about self-renewal in order to promote their ideologies through the cult of the body. Faced with mortal danger, the body can signify regeneration and renewal for the mythological consciousness and also the creation of a "new man" that totalitarianisms aim for. But the question that arises here is how far the invention about the hero and heroism disguises the trauma, the feeling of helplessness before mortal danger. What I want to point out in this context is that the insistence of totalitarian systems on creating a new man arose out of the effort to overcome the traumas of World War I through collective enthusiasm and optimism. The potentials created by the war drama in the social and individual body were used to form an awareness of the "new man" or "new society"—that is to say, a new body.

The violence awakened and incited in World War I continued on its unstoppable course in peace as well, in the constitution of totalitarian societies. But how did the experiences of the war determine the structure of totalitarianism in relation to the body itself? During World War I, as pointed out by Tate, Fussell, and Eric Leed, the heroic body collapsed; it became the atomized body of the warrior, in which rational technology determines the logic of death in the name of national patriotism. The myth about the new man (the warrior-worker) and his strong body appeared precisely because the heroic gesture of the body in war disappeared. Totalitarian regimes arise as a counter-reaction to the general disintegration of political vision and the collapse of the community itself. The optimism that they propagate should therefore not be seen as a

spontaneous expression of "collective will" but primarily as an aspiration to overcome the crisis arising out of war and transform it into something new. That is why "bio-powers" (Michel Foucault) penetrate the body of the citizen in a "totalitarian" manner, penetrating "bare life" (Giorgio Agamben), in order to ensure the conservation of the Aryan man through scientific laboratory and genetic experiments.¹⁵

This also justifies and legitimizes the violence carried out in concentration camps, where the body is the means and object for a scientific and punitive experiment where everything is allowed. The penetration of bio-power into the bodies of citizens arises out of the atomized, fragmented body over which military strategies have already exerted their power. The reason for the politicization and "cultivation" of the body and controlling it for the sake of purity of the national spirit is present, as Agamben points out, not only in the totalitarian regime of Nazism but also in the politics of national states. It developed after World War I through the condition of exception in which the mythologies of national states had already been faced with a crisis: with an atomized, fragmented war body that has its extreme expression in totalitarian societies. The need for the penetration of science into the national body for the sake of preservation of "pure Aryan blood" and the false optimism projected into the strong body of the new man arise out of the war crisis or out of the threat represented by the possibilities of war (the total destruction of the enemy). In the Stalinist totalitarian regime the penetration of science into the collective social body is realized through the "engineering of human souls," which is self-explanatory when it comes to the way in which this totalitarian regime penetrated the private life of its citizens. Czesław Miłosz's book The Captive Mind lucidly describes how a totalitarian Communist system with its propaganda apparatus penetrates the internal mental space through the images of Alpha and Beta and how its logic "imprisons" and controls. 16 Recognizing their role in life in the impersonal, messianic will of the Communist Party, the citizens subjugate themselves to its logic and thus imprison and negate themselves. One of the mechanisms that legitimated the formation of Nazi concentration camps and Stalinist purges and gulags was the policy regarding the enemy that originated in World War I.

Many intellectuals welcomed fascism with optimism: as an expression of heroic values (Curzio Malaparte), as a relationship between form and the creation of something new and dynamic (Luigi Pirandello), as an expression of the new man who glorifies war as creative power through the powers of technological speed (Filippo Tommaso Marinetti), as a

continuation of one's own adventurism and interventionism (Gabriele D'Annunzio), as a possibility for the creation of a Hegelian state in which each individual would contemplate his own freedom through unity (Giovanni Gentile), as a creation of the new man who will reclaim the dignity of the German nation (Gottfried Benn).¹⁷ This should not be seen as a stable foothold even though it did enable them to come out of their own intellectual solitude and isolation and to turn their theories into practical historical actions, but primarily as an expression of disorientation and crisis during and after the war.

The triumph of technology in war also creates crisis. The technology that uses weapons produced in scientific laboratories for the elimination of the enemy and strategies that wreak total massacre in the name of rational calculations for the salvation of the nation evoke the optimism of the messianic totalitarian body. It strives to reconcile the mechanical and organic pagan courage with the rationality of modern technology. The need for the creation of a new, perfect, rational society and the new man arises out of the war crisis. This society strives not only to conjoin the cyclic mythological consciousness of revitalization and regeneration of the society but also to renew the relationship between the collective and the singular, whose boundaries were destroyed in the war crisis.

The boundary between the individual and the collective body that became blurred in World War I is renewed in totalitarianism through collective imagination, which is crystallized in art or iconography representing the leader's body, which also contains the total collective social body. This creates a new relationship between the individual and the collective body. The strong and firm body that is to unite the collective will is an expression of the crisis of the "community" itself, of its unity in the modern age. 18

In the same way the fantasy about the male body was formed through the logic of trench warfare and the traumas it produced. Theweleit analyzes this fantasy in the Third Reich, which is based on the love for the body of mother-earth. In the symbolic power of the army uniform the state makes the social collective body uniform, disciplining and controlling its every part. The fantasy about the strong male body that represents the glorification of the German man and is also supposed to represent a disciplined social unity through militant spirit is an expression of war trauma and the disintegration that the ultranational collective imagination strives to disguise. Totalitarian logic and its power arise from the repressive militant power of the war, from destroyed social relations between men and women, between mothers and sons, between

the father's authority and the son's obedience. This logic not only sent soldiers to their deaths so that they might immortalize national glory but disciplined them, made them obedient, and controlled and rationally dominated them.

In the postwar period, which becomes a state of "exception" (an expression of political nondefinition, as Walter Benjamin names it, in which, in the words of Hamlet, history is "out of joint"), totalitarian regimes arise. They resolve all their fragments, all the conflicts between the modern and the premodern, between the heroic-mythological determination and rational control, through total police control and mobilization of the one-party system, whose logic was active and affirmed in the war itself. That is precisely why one of the main reasons why totalitarian regimes achieve collective consensus (that is, why they are accepted at all) is that the regime promises security, stability, and the eradication of all possibility of internal warfare. Through widespread mobilization they are supposed to articulate and overcome all personal fears and threats caused by war trauma and also to unite the social body, which began collapsing on the brink of civil conflict due to the war and economic crisis. Here consensus and repression are complementary, as Ian Kershaw noticed, and paradoxically they condition each other. 19 Social stability is achieved through the production of threats and dangers that the police apparatus rigorously eradicates and controls by repressive methods. This is nothing but a legitimating of war violence, which in turn produces threats and instability in the name of preserving stability.

The irrational myth about the enemy through which totalitarian societies fortify their power also draws its logic from World War I. 20 Tate and Fussell talk about the power of the propaganda machine during World War I, which represented the enemy on the other side of the trenches with irrational mythological elements, as someone who is invisible.²¹ The totalitarian readiness to realize the totalitarian utopian vision based on a rational scientific program (Zygmunt Bauman) by absolute elimination of the enemy is expressed through this myth of an invisible enemy. Fear of the enemy is irrational; it is susceptible to mythological fantasies. But the eradication of the enemy relies exclusively on rational strategies, proven and confirmed in concentration camps and gulags. The myth that the elimination of the enemy would help create the new man, the new society, which would in turn change all social relations originates from the paranoid threat developed by the national propaganda apparatus during World War I, with its constant emphasis on the irrational enemy. The revolutionary will that is supposed to eliminate the internal enemy

(the "traitor") is another political form made manifest in the strategy of the nation-state. The attitude toward the enemy as a parasite (the kulak or the Jew) that has penetrated "our body" alludes to the idea of the internal purification of the national will from degenerate historical forces. The idea of the internal enemy as a traitor is thus connected to the national fantasy, which is supposed to be purged of its external "weeds" that pollute "our" territory, taint our blood, and threaten the tribal familial unity.

The question of which crisis brought about World War I still remains open. For Marxist theoreticians, it was conditioned by the development of capital, production forces, and production relationships; for the Nazi paranoid ideological machinery, it was the result of a worldwide Jewish conspiracy. The destruction of the class enemy (both the kulaks in Bolshevism and the Jews in fascism) was allegedly supposed to help overcome the crisis and create a new society, the only difference being that the theory of a worldwide Jewish conspiracy was irrational, based on the racist policy of the scapegoat. The interpretation that the crisis of world capital was the cause of the World War I, however, has not yet become obsolete.

Still, a confusing question remains when it comes to the Left and its interpretation of the crisis of capital and the bourgeois class that brought about World War I and the emergence of fascism: why did many leftist movements that accepted the principles of the Second International support the war and hence the politics of nation-states, despite their international convictions? The answer points to the postulate that World War I arose primarily out of the crisis of the nation-state, the crisis of national identity that necessitated a unique territory based on the principles of majority and minority in order to justify national policy. For that reason the irrational and festive enthusiasm with which the news of World War I was welcomed in almost all European states is more than telling. Nation-states actually wanted to confirm and redefine their existence through the war. The open crisis between the ideas of internationalism and nation-states in World War I resulted in the crisis of internationalism itself, which legitimated the expansionist policy of the Third Reich.

In a nation-state a constant potential for conflict exists between the idea of individual self-determination and the idea of collective selfdetermination. This involves the way in which nation-states are to achieve transnational rule and define their policies in multiethnic communities without negating the right to local cultural determination and emancipation in the name of the national culture of the majority. In other words, how do we define the relationship between multinational communities living in the same state without conditioning it upon the majority-minority relationship? Finally, the nation-state is closely tied in with the imperial power of modern states.

Anthony Giddens speaks about the power structures through which the nation-state creates unity and legitimacy.²² Through a joint action of the administration, the economy, and the army, it supervises and disciplines the bodies of its citizens, controls them, and penetrates their everyday routine lives. Giddens notices a connection between the surveillance strategies of modern nation-states and the logic and principles of rule established in totalitarian systems. Consequently the project of totalitarian states draws its models and principles from the modern nation-state. That is why the statement that totalitarian regimes are a residue in the modern age of authoritative systems in which the symbolic function of the monarch signifies sacral power seems all the more rash, because the degree of control and surveillance in a monarchy is not so intense and omnipresent on the local and everyday level as it is in a nation-state. According to some, the bond between the economy and the state was a unique historical project of the Soviet Union. But its model is based primarily on the bond between the military industry and the economy, the so-called war economy in European nation states during World War I.

Speaking about the nostalgia present in the national political discourse of modernism, Peter Wagner points out the aggressive aspect of the politicization of nostalgia itself in nation-states during World War I.²³ While ecstatic speeches are made in the name of the unity of the elementary community, crisis and violence are being manifested, stemming from the politics based on nostalgia and the return to that which was lost through history. National fantasies exploded during World War I through military mobilization, through the policy of radical destruction of the enemy, and through a nostalgic discourse of the idyllic community. The crisis created by nation-states did not offer any alternatives to their political power. On the contrary the crisis was intensified with the emergence of two totalitarian systems that continued the violence started by the politics of nation-states.

With the fall of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Russian Empire, and Ottoman Empire, a whole series of nation-states arose that could never adequately define a theory that enables state legitimacy in their own political discourses. Therefore they invented myths about a heroic past more

or less based on the logic of "blood and land" to unite the community according to some collectivist moral imperative. In this creation of tiny nation-states, the victims were peoples who could not define themselves or classify themselves within a national identity and territory. Thus the Jews, as minorities, as Hannah Arendt points out, were the first victims when national mythologies were created.²⁴ In World War II two peoples were the victims of genocide: the Jews and the Gypsies, who could not fit into the scheme territory = nation = state. During the war waged on the territory of Europe at the beginning of the 1990s the victims were again those peoples who did not fit into the projects of nation-states and the unitarian national collective, especially Bosniaks (Bosnian Muslims). Thus the process of decentralization of great empires, as Arendt notes, enabled the creation of macro-national communities and states that strove to create their own legitimacy through a symbolic order based on local mythology and identification with the politics of leadership. In a certain historical moment, Anthony Giddens points out, the nation-state was practically the only possibility for the creation of legitimacy in regard to specific territory and the establishment of international relations based on military and economic relations. After World War I, proclaiming the universal right of nations to self-determination, many ethnic groups had to produce themselves as nations, to define themselves through a stable identity related to the logic of nation = territory = state.²⁵

NOTES

- 1. Emmanuel Levinas, Entre Nous.
- 2. Mary Douglas, Purity and Danger.
- 3. Clemente Rebora gives a poetic representation of this in his poem "Viatico":

Viatico

O ferito laggiù nel valloncello,
Tanto invocasti
Se tre compagni interi
Cader per te che quasi più non eri,
Tra melma e sangue
Tronco senza gambe
E il tuo lamento ancora,
Pietà di noi rimasti
A rantolarci e non ha fine l'ora,
Affretta l'agonia,
Tu puoi finire,
E conforto ti sia

Nella demenza che non sa impazzire, Mentre sosta il momento, Il sonno sul cervello, L'asciaci in silenzio— Grazie, fratello.

1916

(Clemente Rebora, "Viatico," in *Le notti chiare erano tutte un'alba:*Antologia dei poeti italiani nella Prima guerra mondiale, edited by Andrea Cortellessa, 190)

- 4. Julia Kristeva devotes particular attention to the process of the blurring of boundaries between life and death, between one body and another, in the war experience. The emptiness of war and or the gaping horror that she analyses in the context of World War I are particularly expressed through the loss of boundary between the body as the subject and the body as the object of disintegration, between the one experiencing and the one disappearing, between being and nonbeing. The horror sets in when the body realizes that it can exist without its boundary, dispersed: Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror*. In the same way, when speaking about militant fantasies of Nazi soldiers, Klaus Theweleit analyzes the fears and apprehensions instilled in them as they use discipline (which establishes its legitimacy and power through the discourse on love for the mother country and the party) to control their own feelings in order to tame all that is not fluid, liquid and unstable: Klaus Theweleit, *Male Fantasies*.
- 5. Stanley Kubrick's film *Paths of Glory* (1957) is an authentic representation of the mechanism of military command, in which heroism, the discourse of military glory, is distorted in the total massacre. The film represents the authentic insanity of war. In the final scene the surviving French soldiers, having experienced a total massacre and witnessed the execution of their comrades sentenced to death by the military court for cowardice (for not carrying out the senseless command to conquer the enemy position), sing a German song of militant fantasies along with the German singer. The scene demystifies the myth about war as a glorious feast, an awakening of instinctive creative drives, wherein art and reality intertwine, as many militant artists imagined. As they sing each soldier is exposed to his own loneliness and rejection, and their emotions bring their war traumas to the surface. Through the intoxication of the song sung by a young German woman (whose words they do not understand) their internal fragmentation and atomization emanate from their memories. Their traumas from the shock of war rise to the surface. The fragmentation created in the soldiers by this trauma is also expressed through the body of the young singer, who is supposed to symbolize the others, those who are in fact the enemy. In filming the soldiers the camera is not in the position of a subjective shot to "catch" the fragmentation and internal disorientation in their consciousness. On the contrary, everything is present in the song and celebration, although it is not made fully apparent. The soldiers are singing during a break between two massacres, so the insanity of the celebration is used as a contrast to the usual celebration in patriotic films where soldiers sing a song after the battle that binds them in victorious triumph.

Kubrick's Full Metal Jacket (1987) which is set in Vietnam during the American invasion, is a rare war film that takes place almost completely within an urban landscape where devastated buildings and destroyed objects of civilization further emphasize the horrors of war. In that context the film expresses the internal conflicts of the soldiers who are supposed to kill all enemy soldiers: as the soldiers' jargon puts it, to exterminate the bastards, dinks, gooks. The first part of the film shows how the militant logic of drilling invents the enemy within the ranks. Through daily humiliation and harassment soldiers are taught to hate each other. It is the tragic story of the "chubby," "clumsy" soldier, the scapegoat who does not fit into male soldierly stereotypes. He is harassed by the officers and soldiers alike in their efforts to make a "real" soldier out of him. This is explicated when after "disciplined" torture he becomes a suicidal-manic killer, the embodiment of the mechanism of military violence that serves as the basis for military solidarity and identification. The myth about the enemy is shattered when a group of soldiers kills a young Vietnamese woman, whose death also represents an erotic power for the soldiers: the rifle, as the officer says, is their most loyal girl.

The young Australian athlete–runner in Peter Weir's film *Gallipoli* (1981) goes off to war for patriotic values and feelings and is sent to Turkey to "protect his country." The director, Weir, films his last race as he runs, "directed" by the military command, toward naked cannon barrels. His final triumphant race ends in total massacre.

French director Bertrand Tavernier's authentic film Capitaine Conan (1996) is made up of very long shots portraying the massacre and confusion of battle. He follows the story of a special unit during World War I, which fought on the southern territory of the Balkan peninsula and was later transferred to Rumania after the war. The film portrays how the unit commits acts of violence against civilians for lack of an enemy and the military mechanism of violence, which reflects the imperial logic of French politics whereby war tactics and strategies are used and conserved during peace as well. The authentic story is about the fate of a young soldier of aristocratic origin, awaiting the verdict of a court-martial on the charge of desertion because he was taken prisoner at the moment when he was paralyzed by fear brought on by the war. This is intertwined with the stories of an officer (a friend of the family who insists that the soldier accused of desertion be sentenced to death) and his mother, who comes from France to plead for mercy for her only son. For someone belonging to an aristocratic family, it is impermissible to falter in the face of his own weakness, to be overwhelmed by fear. At the end the court passes a death sentence. But the mother soon receives a letter from the military authorities telling her that her son was killed in battle as a true French hero who fought the enemy (allegedly a group of Hungarian rebels, although the war had been over for some time). The letter also says that the mother should be proud of her son, who heroically gave his life for his country.

Mario Monicelli'a film *La grande guerra/The Great War* (1959) tells a story of two ordinary likable Italian soldiers. One of them is played by Alberto Sordi, a vivacious burlesque character with a penchant for petty cheats. The other is played by Vittorio Gassman, who is at a "student dorm" (a jail), but not for ideological reasons, although allegedly he had been reading Mikhail Bakunin. Due to

this "dire experience" he is attempting to get out of his soldier's duties by using petty cunning tricks, while propagating the internationalist idea that all men are brothers, which makes the war absurd. The film uses the grotesque to portray the absurd bureaucratic military apparatus in an ironic way, putting particular emphasis on the internal moral conflict of the soldiers when they are taken prisoner by the enemy and forced to betray their fellows. Although they are no prototypes of heroism, they refuse to collaborate and are executed. The film does not represent their heroism through collective narration: on the contrary, the horror of war is elucidated through an individual story.

Jean Renoir's famous film *Grand Illusion* (1937) featuring Jean Gabin and Eric von Stroheim treats war as a great theatrical ullusion in which the grownups play war and adhere to its rules in an infantile way. The matter of heroism, honor, aristocratic and national pride (the logic containing rules about "our" soldiers and "their" soldiers), instead of being called the Great War, is called Grand Illusion.

6. Louis-Ferdinand Céline's *Voyage au bout de la nuit* (Journey to the End of the Night), for example, offers a cynical description of women in bed with a soldier who returned from the front. He is also the narrator, as they intertwine their erotic passions with patriotic enthusiasm. Heroes who readily sacrifice their bodies for the salvation of the homeland and for the elevated love for the party and kill the enemy possess an irresistible erotic allure for "gentle" female hearts. Carried away by the holy laws of national will, they are intoxicated by the scent of death as they embrace and kiss the heroic body. The erotic fantasies of women, who have no inkling of the war (having spent it in their warm beds) and have not seen a single massacre, imagine the war as heroic slaying where male bodies full of strength and vitality fire up erotic desires. The slaughterhouse of the war, in which reality is distorted by fear, can be seen in this novel as a grotesque asylum of the twentieth century.

Siegfried Sassoon articulates this sentiment in his poem "Glory of Women":

You love us when we're heroes, home on leave
Or wounded in a mentionable place.
You worship decorations; you believe
That chivalry redeems the war's disgrace.
You make us shells. You listen with delight,
By tales of dirt and danger fondly thrilled.
You crown our distant ardours while we fight,
And mourn our laurelled memories when we're killed,
You can't believe that British troop "retire"
When hell's last horror breaks them, and they run,
Trampling the terrible corpses—blind with blood.
O German mother dreaming by the fire,
While you are knitting socks to send your son
His face is trodden deeper in the mud.

Craiglockhart, 1917 (Siegfried Sassoon, *The War Poems*)

- 7. Paul Fussell, The Great War and Modern Memory.
- 8. Trudi Tate describes the way in which the fragmentary atomized body of war was perceived in literature. Analyzing *Undertones of War* by Edmund Blunden, *Goodbye to All That* by Robert Graves, *A Farewell to Arms* by Ernest Hemingway, and other books, she presents the feeling of the body's fragmentation in war, of its disappearance. The perspective of representing the war, as she points out, was often marked by tragic-comic elements so that the prose was laced with motifs in which the disintegrated body contained something of the grotesque. In Graves's description of the quartered body she notes an inherent ambiguous feeling of disgust and pleasure. From a series of perspectives arising due to the fragmentary, atomized body, Graves reveals the ambiguity of the erotic experience of war when presenting male-female relationships: Trudi Tate, *Modernism*, *History and the First World War*.
- 9. Here we can pose the question of whether modern ideology in the guise of fascism, for example, manipulated the myth to show that war and violence manifest creative energy through which many values of life can be perceived. Is war a constant impetus that enables the expression of creative potentials through suffering and destruction? And is there an element of truth present in this manipulative idea? Friedrich Nietzsche spoke of the invisible internal war through which individuals must pass in order to express themselves. Theodor Adorno's aesthetic theory can also be used to illustrate this point. In this theory shock is one of the main categories through which Adorno contemplates the aesthetic experience and disturbs the need for synthesis, a unity that manifests the dogmatism of provincial aesthetics. The effect of shock is that it disrupts the artist and the perceiver of the work of art from the everyday experience of the world. Thus art enables reality to be observed in a different way and enables the body to express itself in a new way as the individual steps out of the everyday monotonous classification of objects. Another question arises here, however: to what extent does shock contain violence? To what extent is an element of violence present in the experience of art, especially in the moment when the usual and established experience of the world is breached? Furthermore, do artists, in order to articulate themselves, go through a form of violence, and is violence always necessary for the contemplation of something new? Finally (and this is also connected to the experience of Nietsche's philosophy), is it truly necessary for artists to experience internal war in order to create something new, and is it possible to speak of a creative war in that context?
- 10. The relationship between mythology and the disintegrated body is most illustratively represented by Mircea Eliade's book *Shamanism*. The practice of shamanists based on the revelation of the "spiritual body," potentially possessed by everyone, insists on the process of separating the body into pieces and decentralizing it. It is necessary to separate the physical body into pieces so that each piece may be illuminated, opening up another spiritual dimension. The process of partitioning the body is a process of initiation, of maturing in a spiritual sense: discovering new "spiritual illuminations."
- 11. Emilio Gentile, *The Sacralization of Politics in Fascist Italy*. On the formation of the mythology of fascism and its constitution in World War I, see also Roger Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism*.

- François Furet, The Passing of an Illusion; Ernst Nolte, Nazionalsocialismo e bolscevismo.
- 13. Hans Joas writes suggestively about this topic: Hans Joas, War and Modernity.
- 14. Ian Kershaw noticed a parallel between Adolf Hitler's charisma and Max Weber's charisma based on the classical authoritative charisma: Ian Kershaw, Hitler e l'enigma del consenso.
- Michel Foucault, Discipline and Punish: The Birth of a Prison (New York: Vintage Books, 1995); Giorgio Agamben, Homo sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life (Stanford: Stanford Unviersity Press, 1998).
- 16. Czesław Miłosz, The Captive Mind.
- 17. See Alastair Hamilton. The Appeal of Fascism.
- On the crisis of the modern community, see Jean-Luc Nancy, The Inoperative Community; and Zygmunt Bauman, Community.
- 19. Ian Kershaw shows that repression and consensus were formed together through the totalitarian logic of the Third Reich, in which repression created consensus and enabled repression, which does not mean they are identical. Both these elements are present in the same way in the constitution of Hitler's charisma: Kershaw, Hitler e l'enigma del consenso.
- 20. One of these myths is about a kulak (rich peasant) and the other about a Jew who manipulates world relations through capital. Ernst Nolte sees a parallel between the two: Nolte, Nazionalsocialismo e bolscevismo.
- 21. Tate, Modernism, History and the First World War; Fussell, The Great War and Modern Memory.
- 22. Anthony Giddens, The Nation-State and Violence
- 23. Peter Wagner, *Theorizing Modernity*, especially the chapter "The Accessibility of the Past."
- 24. Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1951).
- 25. Another problem of nation-states is the definition of territory through which they could achieve political legitimacy. One of the reasons for the collapse of the former Yugoslavia was that after being a multiethnic society it became a scene for the creation of a large nation-state: Greater Serbia, whose policy was headed by Serbian president Slobodan Milošević.

Chronology

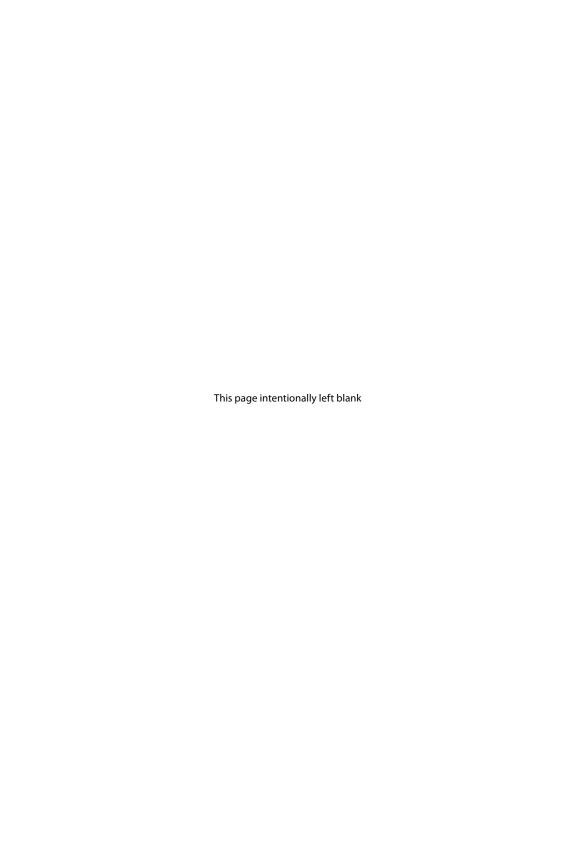
- 1913 (January 23) Coup d'état of the Young Turks against the government, which was prepared to cede Edirne/Adrianopolis to the victorious Balkan states. Mahmut Şevket Paşa became the new prime minister.
- 1913 (February 3) First Balkan War resumes.
- 1913 (May 30) Treaty of London concludes the First Balkan War. The treaty recognized the independence of Albania and set up a commission to determine the boundaries of the new state.
- 1913 (June 1) A secret Serbian-Greek alliance and military protocol against Bulgaria.
- 1913 (June 11–12) Assassination of grand vezir Mahmut Şevket Paşa (June 11) and appointment of Said Halim Paşa. For all intents and purposes the country was ruled by Enver, Talat, and Cemal, a triumvirate that suppressed all oppositions.
- 1913 (June 29–30) The Second Balkan War arises due to territorial disputes in Thrace and Macedonia involving Bulgaria, Greece, and Serbia as well as unaddressed issues related to Albanian independence and Romanian-Bulgarian conflicts.
- 1913 (July 22) Turkish forces led by Enver Bey liberate Edirne.
- 1913 (July 31) Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia, Montenegro, and Greece sign the Treaty of Bucharest to end the Second Balkan War.
- 1913 (September 20) For the first time the Committee of Union and Progress convenes its congress in Istanbul and open to public.
- 1913 (September 30). Turkey signs the Istanbul Agreement with Bulgaria. The Meriç (Maritsa) River is recognized as the boundary, and Edirne returns to Turkey.
- 1913 (November 14) The Treaty of Athens between the Ottoman Empire and Greece formally ends the hostilities between the two states.
- 1913 (December 14) The German Military Mission led by Gen. Otto Liman von Sanders arrives in Istanbul.
- 1914 (January 12) Enver Bey is promoted to general and appointed as the minister of war.
- 1914 (February 8) The Turkish government accepts a program of reform for the Armenian provinces worked out by the powers under the leadership of Russia.
- 1914 (June 28) Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the throne of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and his wife Sophie, Duchess of Hohenberg, are assassinated in Sarajevo, Bosnia
- 1914 (June 29) The Austro-Hungarian Legation at Belgrade sends a dispatch to Vienna accusing Serbia of complicity in the assassination. Austria-Hungary sends troops to the Serbian frontier.
- 1914 (June and July) The Armenian Revolutionary Federation holds its congress in Erzurum.
- 1914 (July 25) Serbia orders mobilization of troops.
- 1914 (July 28) Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia.

- 1914 (July 29) Great Britain warns Germany that it cannot remain neutral. Austrians bombard the Serbian capital, Belgrade. German troops cross the French border.
- 1914 (August 1) France mobilizes its troops. Germany declares war on Russia.
- 1914 (August 3) Britain seizes two warships built for Turkey in British yards. Turkey begins to lay mines in the Dardanelles.
- 1914 (August 3) Germany declares war on France.
- 1914 (August 4) Germany declares war on Belgium. Great Britain declares against Austria-Hungary.
- 1914 (August 6) A secret treaty between Turkey and Bulgaria is concluded in Sofia.
- 1914 (August 11) The German warships *Goeben* and *Breslau* arrive in the Dardanelles.
- 1914 (August 15) The contract of the British Naval Mission in Turkey is terminated.
- 1914 (August 16) The *Goeben* and *Breslau* are reflagged into the Turkish Navy and renamed *Yavuz* and *Midilli*.
- 1914 (September 6) Gen. Fritz Bronsart von Schellendorf completes the revision of the Primary Campaign Plan of the Turkish Army.
- 1914 (September 9) Turkey announces the termination of the Capitulations (special agreements exempting citizens of foreign countries from specified laws of the empire).
- 1914 (September 24) German Admiral Wilhelm Souchon is commissioned as a vice admiral in the Ottoman navy.
- 1914 (September 26) Britain declares Ottoman warships outside the Dardanelles hostile.
- 1914 (September 27) The Ottoman Empire closes the Dardanelles to all shipping following the interception of a Turkish torpedo boat by the Allied fleet.
- 1914 (September 29) Russia seizes control of northwest Iran.
- 1914 (October 25) Enver Paşa authorizes Admiral Souchon to take his ships into the Black Sea and attack the Russian fleet.
- 1914 (October 29) The Ottoman fleet bombards Russian bases in Sevastopol, Feodosia, Yalta, Odessa, and Novorossiisk. The Ottoman state enters World War I.
- 1914 (October 31) The Russian offensive begins at the Caucasus front.
- 1914 (November 2) Russia declares war on the Ottoman Empire.
- 1914 (November 3) The first Allied attack on the Dardanelles. British and French warships shell the fortresses at the entrance of the Straits.
- 1914 (November 4–12) First and Second Battle of Köprüköy against the Russians.
- 1914 (November 5) Britain and France declare war on the Ottoman state.
- 1914 (November 6) First British landing on Mesopotamian soil.
- 1914 (November 14) Sultan Mehmed Reşad declares holy war against Russia, Britain, and France.
- 1914 (November 18) Cemal Paşa arrives in Damascus and assumes command of the 4th Army.
- 1914 (November 21) Britain occupies Basra in southern Iraq.
- 1914 (November 30) The British navy bombards the Yemen coast.
- 1914 (December 8) British forces enter Qurna at the junction of the Euphrates and Tigris.
- 1914 (December 13) The British submarine *B11* sinks the Turkish warship *Mesudiye* in the Straits south of Çanakkale.

- 1914 (December 22) Enver Paşa arrives in Erzurum. The Turkish 3rd Army launches an offensive in the Caucasus.
- 1914 (December 29–January 2, 1915) Disaster at Sarıkamış: thousands of Turkish soldiers die because of inadequate winter clothing and field shelters while crossing the Allahüekber Mountains and during the attack against the Russians and retreat.
- 1915 (January) The Allies attempt to secure the entrance of Greece into the war by offering İzmir. Greek prime minister Eleftherios Venizelos favors the plan and comes into conflict with King Constantine. Venizelos resigns on September 6. Bulgaria concludes an alliance and military convention with Germany and Austria, providing for mutual aid against an attack by neighboring states. Bulgaria is to receive Macedonia and Dobruja.
- 1915 (January 2) Lt. Col. Süleyman Askeri Bey assumes leadership of the Iraq Area Command and the governorship of Baghdad.
- 1915 (January 3) The Russians launch a counteroffensive against the Turkish 3rd Army in the Caucasus. The Turkish offensive in the Caucasus ends in failure. Enver Paşa and Gen. Bronsart von Schellendorf leave the front and return to Istanbul.
- 1915 (January 13) Ottoman irregulars, mainly Kurdish tribal forces, enter Tabriz in northwest Iran. The British War Council approves plans for a naval operation against the Dardanelles.
- 1915 (January 15) Ottoman units march from Beersheba, cross the Sinai Desert, and reach İsmailiye.
- 1915 (January 30) Russian troops retake Tabriz from the Ottoman irregular forces. The Russian advances further encourage the rebellious groups within the Armenian community to ally with Russia. Eastern Anatolia (Bitlis, Van, Sivas, Erzurum, and Elazığ) becomes ungovernable due to the Russian and Armenian collaboration. The Ottoman state confronts a well-organized and ideologically committed Armenian insurgency supported by Russia.
- 1915 (February 1–2) The first Ottoman offensive against the Suez Canal fails.
- 1915 (February 12) Hafiz Hakki Paşa, commander of the 3rd Army, dies of typhus.
- 1915 (February 15) The Ottoman forces at the Suez Canal retreat to Beersheba.
- 1915 (February 18) Enver Paşa arrives in Çanakkale for inspections.
- 1915 (February 19) The British warships *Cornwallis* and *Vengeance* and French warship *Suffren* attack the Dardanelles.
- 1915 (February 25) The British launch an intensified attack on the Dardanelles and the Ottoman fronts.
- 1915 (March 8) The Ottoman minelayer Nusrat lays a line of mines in Erenköy Bay, along the Asian shore inside the entrance to the Dardanelles, to protect Istanbul against Allied occupation. The Ottoman government starts planning evacuation of the capital.
- 1915 (March 18) Ottoman troops under the German command defeat the last attempt by the Allied fleet to force the Straits in the "final hour" of their effort to protect the capital. The British warships *Irresistible* and *Ocean* and French warship *Bouvet* are sunk by mines. The British warships *Agammenon* and *Inflexible* and French warships *Gaulois* and *Suffren* are badly damaged.
- 1915 (March 24) Gen. Otto Liman von Sanders is appointed as the commander of the newly activated Turkish 5th Army.

- 1915 (March 24-25) Armenian volunteer units attack the villages of Van province and the city itself. They cut the Bitlis-Van-Catak telegraph line and interrupt supply lines and roads. Cevdet, the governor of Van, asks for military help to defend the city.
- 1915 (March 28) The Russian fleet shells Turkish ports in the Black Sea.
- 1915 (April 15) The Ottoman forces are defeated by the British, whose tribal Arab forces in Mesopotamia withdraw to Nasiria.
- 1915 (April 18) Ottoman forces confront stiff resistance from the Russian and Kurdish tribal forces and withdraw completely from northern Iran.
- 1915 (April 20) An Armenian uprising starts in the city of Van. The Ottoman military is stretched too thin to send extra troops to defend the city. Russian troops in Başkale realize the weakness of the Ottoman army, which is fighting against both Russian and pro-Russian Armenian insurgents. Van is lost. In early May the entire province is lost to the Armenian volunteer units and Russians.
- 1915 (April 24–25) An amphibious invasion starts in Gallipoli. British forces land at Seddülbahir (Cape Helles) and Australian and New Zealand Corps (ANZAC) at Kabatepe. French forces make a diversionary landing at Kumkale on the Asian shore. The Russian Black Sea fleet shells the forts of the Bosphorus.
- 1915 (April 27) The French troops withdraw from Kumkale.
- 1915 (April 30) The Ottoman torpedo boat Sultanhisar sinks the Australian submarine AE2.
- 1915 (May 6) The Russians launch an offensive through Tortum Valley toward Erzurum.
- 1915 (May 6–8) The Second Battle of Gallipoli.
- 1915 (May 24) The Russian offensive toward Erzurum is halted.
- 1915 (June 4–16) The Third Battle of Gallipoli begins.
- 1915 (June 19) Russian forces launch an offensive toward Muş.
- 1915 (July 26) The Russian attempt to take Muş fails.
- 1915 (August 6) The British land at Suvla Bay on the Gallipoli Peninsula.
- 1915 (August 6–10) The Ottomans are victorious in the Battle of Conkbayırı (Chunuk Bair) on the Gallipoli Peninsula. The Allies are driven off the heights.
- 1915 (September 21) When the Bulgarians began to mobilize, the Serbs appeal to the Greeks for help. Eleftherios Venizelos, who returned to power on August 22, is eager to intervene but demands that the Allies furnish 150,000 troops (which Serbia is obliged to supply according to the mutual treaty of May 1913).
- 1915 (October 6) Baron Colmar von der Goltz is appointed as the commander of the Turkish 6th Army.
- 1915 (November 22) The Battle of Ctesiphon, twenty-five miles south of Baghdad. The Allies inflict heavy casualties on the Ottoman military but are forced to retire to Kut due to lack of supplies. The Ottoman soldiers give chase and besiege the town.
- 1915 (December 6) Allied headquarters decides to evacuate the Gallipoli Peninsula.
- 1915 (December 7) Ottoman forces lay siege to Kut in Mesopotamia.
- 1915 (December 20) The Allies complete the evacuation of 83,000 troops from Suvla Bay and ANZAC Cove in Gallipoli. Not one soldier or sailor is killed in the withdrawal: the Ottoman military is not aware of the evacuation taking place.
- 1916 (January 9) Allied forces complete the evacuation of the Gallipoli Peninsula.

- 1916 (January 10) The Russian "winter offensive" on the Caucasus front begins.
- 1916 (February 16) Russia occupies Erzurum and Bayburt.
- 1916 (March 6) Russian forces capture Rize on the Black Sea coast.
- 1916 (April 18) Russian forces capture Trabzon on the Black Sea coast.
- 1916 (April 19) Field Marshal von der Goltz dies of cholera.
- 1916 (April 29) Kut surrenders to Ottoman forces after a siege of 147 days.
- 1916 (May 12) Maj. Gen. Charles Townshend and other British officers leave Baghdad as prisoners of war and arrive in Istanbul after a twenty-day trip through Anatolia.
- 1916 (June 27) The Arab Revolt against the Ottoman Empire is proclaimed in western Arabia.
- 1916 (July 10) Responding to Gen. Erich von Falkenhayn's demand, Enver Paşa orders the allocation of Ottoman troops to the Eastern European Front.
- 1916 (July 17) Russian forces occupy Bayburt.
- 1916 (July 25) Russian forces occupy Erzincan.
- 1916 (December 8) The Central Powers occupy Bucharest.
- 1917 (January 1) Turkish units in Romania cross the Danube River.
- 1917 (February 24) The Second Battle of Kut. British forces recapture the town.
- 1917 (March 10) Turkish authorities order the evacuation of Baghdad.
- 1917 (March 11) British forces capture Baghdad.
- 1917 (March 15) Tsar Nicholas II abdicates as Moscow falls to Russian revolutionaries. The dismantling of the Russian army frees German troops for the Western Front.
- 1917 (April 1) The Russian army starts to retreat from eastern Anatolia.
- 1917 (September 26) All of the remaining Turkish units leave Galicia for Istanbul.
- 1917 (December 11) British forces capture Jerusalem.
- 1917 (December 18) Turkey and the newly independent Transcaucasian Republic agree on a ceasefire.
- 1918 (January 8) Wilson's Fourteen Points are delivered to the U.S. Congress.
- 1918 (March 3) The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk marks Russia's exit from the war.
- 1918 (April 5) Turkish forces capture Sarıkamış from the Russians.
- 1918 (April 14) Batumi (Batum) liberated.
- 1918 (September 15) The Ottoman army enters Baku.
- 1918 (October 1) Damascus is occupied by British forces.
- 1918 (October 8) Grand vezir Talat Paşa resigns.
- 1918 (October 30) An armistice is signed between the Ottoman Empire and the Allies in Mudros on the island of Lemnos.
- 1918 (November 2) Enver Paşa, Talat Paşa, and Cemal Paşa leave the country on board a German submarine. The Committee of Union and Progress is dissolved.
- 1918 (November 13) An Allied invasion fleet of fifty-five warships arrives at Istanbul.
- 1918 (December 21) Sultan Vahdettin dissolves the Ottoman parliament.
- 1919 (January 18) The Paris Peace Conference begins.
- 1919 (January 25) The principle of a League of Nations is ratified.
- 1919 (February 14) A draft of the League of Nations charter is completed.



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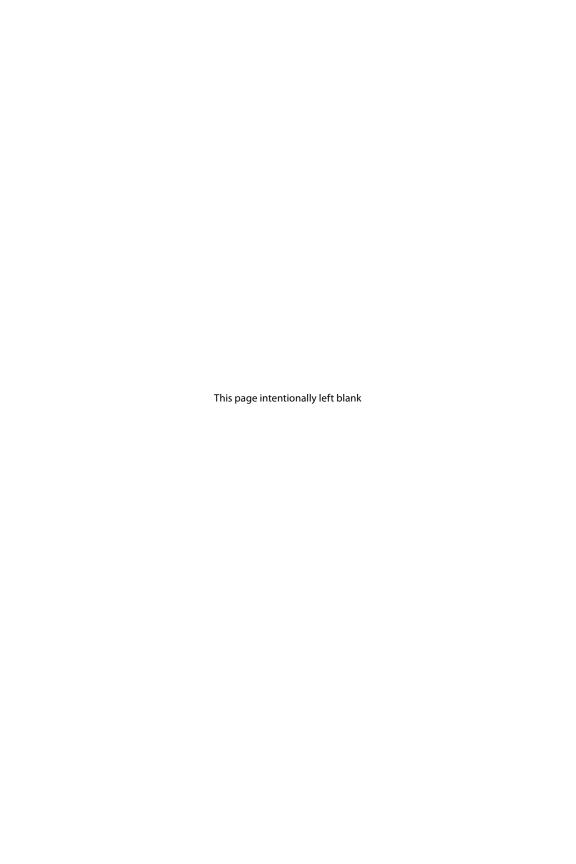
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